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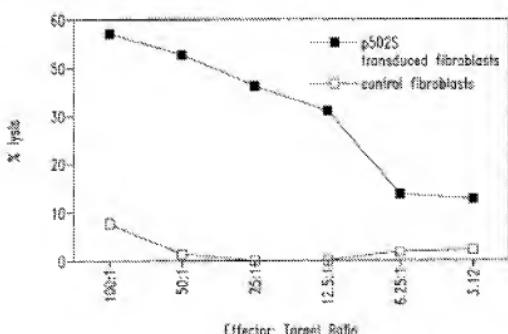
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(56) Title: COMPOSITIONS AND METHODS FOR THE THERAPY AND DIAGNOSIS OF PROSTATE CANCER



WO 01/34802 A2



(57) Abstract: Compositions and methods for the therapy and diagnosis of cancer, such as prostate cancer, are disclosed. Compositions may comprise one or more prostate specific proteins, immunogenic portions thereof, or polynucleotides that encode such proteins. Alternatively, a therapeutic composition may comprise an antigen presenting cell that expresses a prostate specific protein, or a T cell that is specific for cells expressing such a protein. Such compositions may be used, for example, for the prevention and treatment of diseases such as prostate cancer. Diagnostic methods based on detecting a prostate specific protein or mRNA encoding such a protein in a sample are also provided.



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COMPOSITIONS AND METHODS FOR THE THERAPY AND
DIAGNOSIS OF PROSTATE CANCER

5 TECHNICAL FIELD

The present invention relates generally to therapy and diagnosis of cancer, such as prostate cancer. The invention is more specifically related to polypeptides comprising at least a portion of a prostate-specific protein, and to polynucleotides encoding such polypeptides. Such polypeptides and polynucleotides may be used in vaccines and pharmaceutical compositions for 10 prevention and treatment of prostate cancer, and for the diagnosis and monitoring of such cancers.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Prostate cancer is the most common form of cancer among males, with an estimated incidence of 30% in men over the age of 50. Overwhelming clinical evidence shows that human prostate cancer has the propensity to metastasize to bone, and the disease appears to progress 15 inevitably from androgen dependent to androgen refractory status, leading to increased patient mortality. This prevalent disease is currently the second leading cause of cancer death among men in the U.S.

In spite of considerable research into therapies for the disease, prostate cancer remains difficult to treat. Commonly, treatment is based on surgery and/or radiation therapy, but 20 these methods are ineffective in a significant percentage of cases. Two previously identified prostate specific proteins - prostate specific antigen (PSA) and prostatic acid phosphatase (PAP) - have limited therapeutic and diagnostic potential. For example, PSA levels do not always correlate well with the presence of prostate cancer, being positive in a percentage of non-prostate cancer cases, including benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH). Furthermore, PSA measurements correlate 25 with prostate volume, and do not indicate the level of metastasis.

In spite of considerable research into therapies for these and other cancers, prostate cancer remains difficult to diagnose and treat effectively. Accordingly, there is a need in the art for improved methods for detecting and treating such cancers. The present invention fulfills these needs and further provides other related advantages.

30 SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Briefly stated, the present invention provides compositions and methods for the

diagnosis and therapy of cancer, such as prostate cancer. In one aspect, the present invention provides polypeptides comprising at least a portion of a prostate-specific protein, or a variant thereof. Certain portions and other variants are immunogenic, such that the ability of the variant to react with antigen-specific antisera is not substantially diminished. Within certain embodiments, 5 the polypeptide comprises at least an immunogenic portion of a prostate-specific protein, or a variant thereof, wherein the protein comprises an amino acid sequence that is encoded by a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of: (a) sequences recited in any one of SEQ ID NOs:1-111, 115-171, 173-175, 177, 179-305, 307-315, 326, 328, 330, 332-335, 340-375, 381, 382, 384-476, 524, 526, 530, 531, 533, 535 and 536; (b) sequences that hybridize to any of the 10 foregoing sequences under moderately stringent conditions; and (c) complements of any of the sequence of (a) or (b). In certain specific embodiments, such a polypeptide comprises at least a portion, or variant thereof, of a protein that includes an amino acid sequence selected from the group consisting of sequences recited in any one of SEQ ID NO: 112-114, 172, 176, 178, 327, 329, 331, 336, 339, 376-380, 383, 477-483, 496, 504, 505, 519, 520, 522, 525, 527, 532, 534, 537-550.

15 The present invention further provides polynucleotides that encode a polypeptide as described above, or a portion thereof (such as a portion encoding at least 15 amino acid residues of a prostate-specific protein), expression vectors comprising such polynucleotides and host cells transformed or transfected with such expression vectors.

Within other aspects, the present invention provides pharmaceutical compositions 20 comprising a polypeptide or polynucleotide as described above and a physiologically acceptable carrier.

Within a related aspect of the present invention, vaccines for prophylactic or therapeutic use are provided. Such vaccines comprise a polypeptide or polynucleotide as described above and an immunostimulant.

25 The present invention further provides pharmaceutical compositions that comprise: (a) an antibody or antigen-binding fragment thereof that specifically binds to a prostate-specific protein; and (b) a physiologically acceptable carrier. In certain embodiments, the present invention provides monoclonal antibodies that specifically bind to an amino acid sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NO: 496, 504, 505, 509-517, 522 and 541-550, together with 30 monoclonal antibodies comprising a complementarity determining region selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NO: 502, 503 and 506-508.

Within further aspects, the present invention provides pharmaceutical compositions comprising: (a) an antigen presenting cell that expresses a polypeptide as described above and (b) a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier or excipient. Antigen presenting cells include dendritic cells, macrophages, monocytes, fibroblasts and B cells.

5 Within related aspects, vaccines are provided that comprise: (a) an antigen presenting cell that expresses a polypeptide as described above and (b) an immunostimulant.

The present invention further provides, in other aspects, fusion proteins that comprise at least one polypeptide as described above, as well as polynucleotides encoding such fusion proteins.

10 Within related aspects, pharmaceutical compositions comprising a fusion protein, or a polynucleotide encoding a fusion protein, in combination with a physiologically acceptable carrier are provided.

Vaccines are further provided, within other aspects, that comprise a fusion protein, or a polynucleotide encoding a fusion protein, in combination with an immunostimulant.

15 Within further aspects, the present invention provides methods for inhibiting the development of a cancer in a patient, comprising administering to a patient a pharmaceutical composition or vaccine as recited above.

The present invention further provides, within other aspects, methods for removing tumor cells from a biological sample, comprising contacting a biological sample with T cells that 20 specifically react with a prostate-specific protein, wherein the step of contacting is performed under conditions and for a time sufficient to permit the removal of cells expressing the protein from the sample.

Within related aspects, methods are provided for inhibiting the development of a cancer in a patient, comprising administering to a patient a biological sample treated as described 25 above.

Methods are further provided, within other aspects, for stimulating and/or expanding T cells specific for a prostate-specific protein, comprising contacting T cells with one or more of: (i) a polypeptide as described above; (ii) a polynucleotide encoding such a polypeptide; and/or (iii) an antigen presenting cell that expresses such a polypeptide; under conditions and for a time 30 sufficient to permit the stimulation and/or expansion of T cells. Isolated T cell populations comprising T cells prepared as described above are also provided.

Within further aspects, the present invention provides methods for inhibiting the development of a cancer in a patient, comprising administering to a patient an effective amount of a T cell population as described above.

The present invention further provides methods for inhibiting the development of a cancer in a patient, comprising the steps of: (a) incubating CD4⁺ and/or CD8⁺ T cells isolated from a patient with one or more of: (i) a polypeptide comprising at least an immunogenic portion of a prostate-specific protein; (ii) a polynucleotide encoding such a polypeptide; and (iii) an antigen-presenting cell that expresses such a polypeptide; and (b) administering to the patient an effective amount of the proliferated T cells, and thereby inhibiting the development of a cancer in the patient.

10 Proliferated cells may, but need not, be cloned prior to administration to the patient.

Within further aspects, the present invention provides methods for determining the presence or absence of a cancer in a patient, comprising: (a) contacting a biological sample obtained from a patient with a binding agent that binds to a polypeptide as recited above; (b) detecting in the sample an amount of polypeptide that binds to the binding agent; and (c) comparing the amount of polypeptide with a predetermined cut-off value, and therefrom determining the presence or absence of a cancer in the patient. Within preferred embodiments, the binding agent is an antibody, more preferably a monoclonal antibody. The cancer may be prostate cancer.

The present invention also provides, within other aspects, methods for monitoring the progression of a cancer in a patient. Such methods comprise the steps of: (a) contacting a biological sample obtained from a patient at a first point in time with a binding agent that binds to a polypeptide as recited above; (b) detecting in the sample an amount of polypeptide that binds to the binding agent; (c) repeating steps (a) and (b) using a biological sample obtained from the patient at a subsequent point in time; and (d) comparing the amount of polypeptide detected in step (c) with the amount detected in step (b) and therefrom monitoring the progression of the cancer in the patient.

The present invention further provides, within other aspects, methods for determining the presence or absence of a cancer in a patient, comprising the steps of: (a) contacting a biological sample obtained from a patient with an oligonucleotide that hybridizes to a polynucleotide that encodes a prostate-specific protein; (b) detecting in the sample a level of a polynucleotide, preferably mRNA, that hybridizes to the oligonucleotide; and (c) comparing the level of polynucleotide that hybridizes to the oligonucleotide with a predetermined cut-off value, and therefrom determining the presence or absence of a cancer in the patient. Within certain

embodiments, the amount of mRNA is detected via polymerase chain reaction using, for example, at least one oligonucleotide primer that hybridizes to a polynucleotide encoding a polypeptide as recited above, or a complement of such a polynucleotide. Within other embodiments, the amount of mRNA is detected using a hybridization technique, employing an oligonucleotide probe that 5 hybridizes to a polynucleotide that encodes a polypeptide as recited above, or a complement of such a polynucleotide.

In related aspects, methods are provided for monitoring the progression of a cancer in a patient, comprising the steps of: (a) contacting a biological sample obtained from a patient with an oligonucleotide that hybridizes to a polynucleotide that encodes a prostate-specific protein; (b) 10 detecting in the sample an amount of a polynucleotide that hybridizes to the oligonucleotide; (c) repeating steps (a) and (b) using a biological sample obtained from the patient at a subsequent point in time; and (d) comparing the amount of polynucleotide detected in step (c) with the amount detected in step (b) and therefrom monitoring the progression of the cancer in the patient.

Within further aspects, the present invention provides antibodies, such as 15 monoclonal antibodies, that bind to a polypeptide as described above, as well as diagnostic kits comprising such antibodies. Diagnostic kits comprising one or more oligonucleotide probes or primers as described above are also provided.

These and other aspects of the present invention will become apparent upon reference to the following detailed description and attached drawings. All references disclosed 20 herein are hereby incorporated by reference in their entirety as if each was incorporated individually.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS AND SEQUENCE IDENTIFIERS

Figure 1 illustrates the ability of T cells to kill fibroblasts expressing the 25 representative prostate-specific polypeptide P502S, as compared to control fibroblasts. The percentage lysis is shown as a series of effector:target ratios, as indicated.

Figures 2A and 2B illustrate the ability of T cells to recognize cells expressing the representative prostate-specific polypeptide P502S. In each case, the number of γ -interferon spots is shown for different numbers of responders. In Figure 2A, data is presented for fibroblasts pulsed with the P2S-12 peptide, as compared to fibroblasts pulsed with a control E75 peptide. In Figure 30 2B, data is presented for fibroblasts expressing P502S, as compared to fibroblasts expressing HER-2/neu.

Figure 3 represents a peptide competition binding assay showing that the P1S#10 peptide, derived from P501S, binds HLA-A2. Peptide P1S#10 inhibits HLA-A2 restricted presentation of fluM58 peptide to CTL clone D150M58 in TNF release bioassay. D150M58 CTL is specific for the HLA-A2 binding influenza matrix peptide fluM58.

Figure 4 illustrates the ability of T cell lines generated from P1S#10 immunized mice to specifically lyse P1S#10-pulsed Jurkat A2Kb targets and P501S-transduced Jurkat A2Kb targets, as compared to EGFP-transduced Jurkat A2Kb. The percent lysis is shown as a series of effector to target ratios, as indicated.

Figure 5 illustrates the ability of a T cell clone to recognize and specifically lyse Jurkat A2Kb cells expressing the representative prostate-specific polypeptide P501S, thereby demonstrating that the P1S#10 peptide may be a naturally processed epitope of the P501S polypeptide.

Figures 6A and 6B are graphs illustrating the specificity of a CD8⁺ cell line (3A-1) for a representative prostate-specific antigen (P501S). Figure 6A shows the results of a ⁵¹Cr release assay. The percent specific lysis is shown as a series of effector:target ratios, as indicated. Figure 6B shows the production of interferon-gamma by 3A-1 cells stimulated with autologous B-LCL transduced with P501S, at varying effector:target ratios as indicated.

Figure 7 is a Western blot showing the expression of P501S in baculovirus.

Figure 8 illustrates the results of epitope mapping studies on P501S.

Figure 9 is a schematic representation of the P501S protein showing the location of transmembrane domains and predicted intracellular and extracellular domains.

Figure 10 is a genomic map showing the location of the prostate genes P775P, P704P, B305D, P712P and P774P within the Cat Eye Syndrome region of chromosome 22q11.2

Figure 11 shows the results of an ELISA assay of antibody specificity to P501S peptides.

SEQ ID NO: 1 is the determined cDNA sequence for F1-13

SEQ ID NO: 2 is the determined 3' cDNA sequence for F1-12

SEQ ID NO: 3 is the determined 5' cDNA sequence for F1-12

SEQ ID NO: 4 is the determined 3' cDNA sequence for F1-16

SEQ ID NO: 5 is the determined 3' cDNA sequence for H1-1

SEQ ID NO: 6 is the determined 3' cDNA sequence for H1-9

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SEQ ID NO: 40 is the determined 3' cDNA sequence for N1-1864

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SEQ ID NO: 106 is the determined cDNA sequence for 1D-4280

SEQ ID NO: 107 is the determined full length cDNA sequence for F1-12 (also referred to as P504S)

5

SEQ ID NO: 108 is the predicted amino acid sequence for F1-12

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SEQ ID NO: 110 is the determined full length cDNA sequence for L1-12 (also referred to as P501S)

SEQ ID NO: 111 is the determined full length cDNA sequence for N1-1862 (also referred to as

10 P503S)

SEQ ID NO: 112 is the predicted amino acid sequence for J1-17

SEQ ID NO: 113 is the predicted amino acid sequence for L1-12 (also referred to as P501S)

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10 SEQ ID NO: 207 is the determined cDNA sequence for 10-d8fwd

SEQ ID NO: 208 is the determined cDNA sequence for 10-H10con

SEQ ID NO: 209 is the determined cDNA sequence for 11-C8rev

SEQ ID NO: 210 is the determined cDNA sequence for 7.g6fwd

SEQ ID NO: 211 is the determined cDNA sequence for 7.g6rev

15 SEQ ID NO: 212 is the determined cDNA sequence for 8-b5fwd

SEQ ID NO: 213 is the determined cDNA sequence for 8-b5rev

SEQ ID NO: 214 is the determined cDNA sequence for 8-b6fwd

SEQ ID NO: 215 is the determined cDNA sequence for 8-b6 rev

SEQ ID NO: 216 is the determined cDNA sequence for 8-d4fwd

20 SEQ ID NO: 217 is the determined cDNA sequence for 8-d9rev

SEQ ID NO: 218 is the determined cDNA sequence for 8-g3fwd

SEQ ID NO: 219 is the determined cDNA sequence for 8-g3rev

SEQ ID NO: 220 is the determined cDNA sequence for 8-h11rev

SEQ ID NO: 221 is the determined cDNA sequence for g-f12fwd

25 SEQ ID NO: 222 is the determined cDNA sequence for g-f3rev

SEQ ID NO: 223 is the determined cDNA sequence for P509S

SEQ ID NO: 224 is the determined cDNA sequence for P510S

SEQ ID NO: 225 is the determined cDNA sequence for P703DES

SEQ ID NO: 226 is the determined cDNA sequence for 9-A11

30 SEQ ID NO: 227 is the determined cDNA sequence for 8-C6

SEQ ID NO: 228 is the determined cDNA sequence for 8-H7

SEQ ID NO: 229 is the determined cDNA sequence for JPTPN13

SEQ ID NO: 230 is the determined cDNA sequence for JPTPN14
SEQ ID NO: 231 is the determined cDNA sequence for JPTPN23
SEQ ID NO: 232 is the determined cDNA sequence for JPTPN24
SEQ ID NO: 233 is the determined cDNA sequence for JPTPN25
5 SEQ ID NO: 234 is the determined cDNA sequence for JPTPN30
SEQ ID NO: 235 is the determined cDNA sequence for JPTPN34
SEQ ID NO: 236 is the determined cDNA sequence for PTPN35
SEQ ID NO: 237 is the determined cDNA sequence for JPTPN36
SEQ ID NO: 238 is the determined cDNA sequence for JPTPN38
10 SEQ ID NO: 239 is the determined cDNA sequence for JPTPN39
SEQ ID NO: 240 is the determined cDNA sequence for JPTPN40
SEQ ID NO: 241 is the determined cDNA sequence for JPTPN41
SEQ ID NO: 242 is the determined cDNA sequence for JPTPN42
SEQ ID NO: 243 is the determined cDNA sequence for JPTPN45
15 SEQ ID NO: 244 is the determined cDNA sequence for JPTPN46
SEQ ID NO: 245 is the determined cDNA sequence for JPTPN51
SEQ ID NO: 246 is the determined cDNA sequence for JPTPN56
SEQ ID NO: 247 is the determined cDNA sequence for PTPN64
SEQ ID NO: 248 is the determined cDNA sequence for JPTPN65
20 SEQ ID NO: 249 is the determined cDNA sequence for JPTPN67
SEQ ID NO: 250 is the determined cDNA sequence for JPTPN76
SEQ ID NO: 251 is the determined cDNA sequence for JPTPN84
SEQ ID NO: 252 is the determined cDNA sequence for JPTPN85
SEQ ID NO: 253 is the determined cDNA sequence for JPTPN86
25 SEQ ID NO: 254 is the determined cDNA sequence for JPTPN87
SEQ ID NO: 255 is the determined cDNA sequence for JPTPN88
SEQ ID NO: 256 is the determined cDNA sequence for JP1F1
SEQ ID NO: 257 is the determined cDNA sequence for JP1F2
SEQ ID NO: 258 is the determined cDNA sequence for JP1C2
30 SEQ ID NO: 259 is the determined cDNA sequence for JP1B1
SEQ ID NO: 260 is the determined cDNA sequence for JP1B2
SEQ ID NO: 261 is the determined cDNA sequence for JP1D3

SEQ ID NO: 262 is the determined cDNA sequence for JP1A4
SEQ ID NO: 263 is the determined cDNA sequence for JP1F5
SEQ ID NO: 264 is the determined cDNA sequence for JP1E6
SEQ ID NO: 265 is the determined cDNA sequence for JP1D6
5 SEQ ID NO: 266 is the determined cDNA sequence for JP1B5
SEQ ID NO: 267 is the determined cDNA sequence for JP1A6
SEQ ID NO: 268 is the determined cDNA sequence for JP1E8
SEQ ID NO: 269 is the determined cDNA sequence for JP1D7
SEQ ID NO: 270 is the determined cDNA sequence for JP1D9
10 SEQ ID NO: 271 is the determined cDNA sequence for JP1C10
SEQ ID NO: 272 is the determined cDNA sequence for JP1A9
SEQ ID NO: 273 is the determined cDNA sequence for JP1F12
SEQ ID NO: 274 is the determined cDNA sequence for JP1E12
SEQ ID NO: 275 is the determined cDNA sequence for JP1D11
15 SEQ ID NO: 276 is the determined cDNA sequence for JP1C11
SEQ ID NO: 277 is the determined cDNA sequence for JP1C12
SEQ ID NO: 278 is the determined cDNA sequence for JP1B12
SEQ ID NO: 279 is the determined cDNA sequence for JP1A12
SEQ ID NO: 280 is the determined cDNA sequence for JP8G2
20 SEQ ID NO: 281 is the determined cDNA sequence for JP8H1
SEQ ID NO: 282 is the determined cDNA sequence for JP8H2
SEQ ID NO: 283 is the determined cDNA sequence for JP8A3
SEQ ID NO: 284 is the determined cDNA sequence for JP8A4
SEQ ID NO: 285 is the determined cDNA sequence for JP8C3
25 SEQ ID NO: 286 is the determined cDNA sequence for JP8G4
SEQ ID NO: 287 is the determined cDNA sequence for JP8B6
SEQ ID NO: 288 is the determined cDNA sequence for JP8D6
SEQ ID NO: 289 is the determined cDNA sequence for JP8F5
SEQ ID NO: 290 is the determined cDNA sequence for JP8A8
30 SEQ ID NO: 291 is the determined cDNA sequence for JP8C7
SEQ ID NO: 292 is the determined cDNA sequence for JP8D7
SEQ ID NO: 293 is the determined cDNA sequence for JP8D8

SEQ ID NO: 294 is the determined cDNA sequence for JP8E7
SEQ ID NO: 295 is the determined cDNA sequence for JP8F8
SEQ ID NO: 296 is the determined cDNA sequence for JP8G8
SEQ ID NO: 297 is the determined cDNA sequence for JP8B10

5 SEQ ID NO: 298 is the determined cDNA sequence for JP8C10
SEQ ID NO: 299 is the determined cDNA sequence for JP8E9
SEQ ID NO: 300 is the determined cDNA sequence for JP8E10
SEQ ID NO: 301 is the determined cDNA sequence for JP8F9
SEQ ID NO: 302 is the determined cDNA sequence for JP8H9

10 SEQ ID NO: 303 is the determined cDNA sequence for JP8C12
SEQ ID NO: 304 is the determined cDNA sequence for JP8E11
SEQ ID NO: 305 is the determined cDNA sequence for JP8E12
SEQ ID NO: 306 is the amino acid sequence for the peptide PS2#12
SEQ ID NO: 307 is the determined cDNA sequence for P711P

15 SEQ ID NO: 308 is the determined cDNA sequence for P712P
SEQ ID NO: 309 is the determined cDNA sequence for CLONE23
SEQ ID NO: 310 is the determined cDNA sequence for P774P
SEQ ID NO: 311 is the determined cDNA sequence for P775P
SEQ ID NO: 312 is the determined cDNA sequence for P715P

20 SEQ ID NO: 313 is the determined cDNA sequence for P716P
SEQ ID NO: 314 is the determined cDNA sequence for P767P
SEQ ID NO: 315 is the determined cDNA sequence for P768P
SEQ ID NO: 316-325 are the determined cDNA sequences of previously isolated genes
SEQ ID NO: 326 is the determined cDNA sequence for P703PDE5

25 SEQ ID NO: 327 is the predicted amino acid sequence for P703PDE5
SEQ ID NO: 328 is the determined cDNA sequence for P703P6.26
SEQ ID NO: 329 is the predicted amino acid sequence for P703P6.26
SEQ ID NO: 330 is the determined cDNA sequence for P703PX-23
SEQ ID NO: 331 is the predicted amino acid sequence for P703PX-23

30 SEQ ID NO: 332 is the determined full length cDNA sequence for P509S
SEQ ID NO: 333 is the determined extended cDNA sequence for P707P (also referred to as II-C9)
SEQ ID NO: 334 is the determined cDNA sequence for P714P

SEQ ID NO: 335 is the determined cDNA sequence for P705P (also referred to as 9-F3)

SEQ ID NO: 336 is the predicted amino acid sequence for P705P

SEQ ID NO: 337 is the amino acid sequence of the peptide P1S#10

SEQ ID NO: 338 is the amino acid sequence of the peptide p5

5 SEQ ID NO: 339 is the predicted amino acid sequence of P509S

SEQ ID NO: 340 is the determined cDNA sequence for P778P

SEQ ID NO: 341 is the determined cDNA sequence for P786P

SEQ ID NO: 342 is the determined cDNA sequence for P789P

SEQ ID NO: 343 is the determined cDNA sequence for a clone showing homology to Homo

10 sapiens MM46 mRNA

SEQ ID NO: 344 is the determined cDNA sequence for a clone showing homology to Homo sapiens TNF-alpha stimulated ABC protein (ABC50) mRNA

SEQ ID NO: 345 is the determined cDNA sequence for a clone showing homology to Homo sapiens mRNA for E-cadherin

15 SEQ ID NO: 346 is the determined cDNA sequence for a clone showing homology to Human nuclear-encoded mitochondrial serine hydroxymethyltransferase (SHMT)

SEQ ID NO: 347 is the determined cDNA sequence for a clone showing homology to Homo sapiens natural resistance-associated macrophage protein2 (NRAMP2)

SEQ ID NO: 348 is the determined cDNA sequence for a clone showing homology to Homo

20 sapiens phosphoglucomutase-related protein (PGMRP)

SEQ ID NO: 349 is the determined cDNA sequence for a clone showing homology to Human mRNA for proteosome subunit p40

SEQ ID NO: 350 is the determined cDNA sequence for P777P

SEQ ID NO: 351 is the determined cDNA sequence for P779P

25 SEQ ID NO: 352 is the determined cDNA sequence for P790P

SEQ ID NO: 353 is the determined cDNA sequence for P784P

SEQ ID NO: 354 is the determined cDNA sequence for P776P

SEQ ID NO: 355 is the determined cDNA sequence for P780P

SEQ ID NO: 356 is the determined cDNA sequence for P544S

30 SEQ ID NO: 357 is the determined cDNA sequence for P745S

SEQ ID NO: 358 is the determined cDNA sequence for P782P

SEQ ID NO: 359 is the determined cDNA sequence for P783P

SEQ ID NO: 360 is the determined cDNA sequence for unknown 17984

SEQ ID NO: 361 is the determined cDNA sequence for P787P

SEQ ID NO: 362 is the determined cDNA sequence for P788P

SEQ ID NO: 363 is the determined cDNA sequence for unknown 17994

5 SEQ ID NO: 364 is the determined cDNA sequence for P781P

SEQ ID NO: 365 is the determined cDNA sequence for P785P

SEQ ID NO: 366-375 are the determined cDNA sequences for splice variants of B305D.

SEQ ID NO: 376 is the predicted amino acid sequence encoded by the sequence of SEQ ID NO: 366.

10 SEQ ID NO: 377 is the predicted amino acid sequence encoded by the sequence of SEQ ID NO: 372.

SEQ ID NO: 378 is the predicted amino acid sequence encoded by the sequence of SEQ ID NO: 373.

SEQ ID NO: 379 is the predicted amino acid sequence encoded by the sequence of SEQ ID NO: 15 374.

SEQ ID NO: 380 is the predicted amino acid sequence encoded by the sequence of SEQ ID NO: 375.

SEQ ID NO: 381 is the determined cDNA sequence for B716P.

SEQ ID NO: 382 is the determined full-length cDNA sequence for P711P.

20 SEQ ID NO: 383 is the predicted amino acid sequence for P711P.

SEQ ID NO: 384 is the cDNA sequence for P1000C.

SEQ ID NO: 385 is the cDNA sequence for CGI-82.

SEQ ID NO: 386 is the cDNA sequence for 23320.

SEQ ID NO: 387 is the cDNA sequence for CGI-69.

25 SEQ ID NO: 388 is the cDNA sequence for L-iditol-2-dehydrogenase.

SEQ ID NO: 389 is the cDNA sequence for 23379.

SEQ ID NO: 390 is the cDNA sequence for 23381.

SEQ ID NO: 391 is the cDNA sequence for KIAA0122.

SEQ ID NO: 392 is the cDNA sequence for 23399.

30 SEQ ID NO: 393 is the cDNA sequence for a previously identified gene.

SEQ ID NO: 394 is the cDNA sequence for HCLBP.

SEQ ID NO: 395 is the cDNA sequence for transglutaminase.

SEQ ID NO:396 is the cDNA sequence for a previously identified gene.
SEQ ID NO:397 is the cDNA sequence for PAP.
SEQ ID NO:398 is the cDNA sequence for Ets transcription factor PDEF.
SEQ ID NO:399 is the cDNA sequence for hTGR.

5 SEQ ID NO:400 is the cDNA sequence for KJAA0295.
SEQ ID NO:401 is the cDNA sequence for 22545.
SEQ ID NO:402 is the cDNA sequence for 22547.
SEQ ID NO:403 is the cDNA sequence for 22548.
SEQ ID NO:404 is the cDNA sequence for 22550.

10 SEQ ID NO:405 is the cDNA sequence for 22551.
SEQ ID NO:406 is the cDNA sequence for 22552.
SEQ ID NO:407 is the cDNA sequence for 22553.
SEQ ID NO:408 is the cDNA sequence for 22558.
SEQ ID NO:409 is the cDNA sequence for 22562.

15 SEQ ID NO:410 is the cDNA sequence for 22565.
SEQ ID NO:411 is the cDNA sequence for 22567.
SEQ ID NO:412 is the cDNA sequence for 22568.
SEQ ID NO:413 is the cDNA sequence for 22570.
SEQ ID NO:414 is the cDNA sequence for 22571.

20 SEQ ID NO:415 is the cDNA sequence for 22572.
SEQ ID NO:416 is the cDNA sequence for 22573.
SEQ ID NO:417 is the cDNA sequence for 22573.
SEQ ID NO:418 is the cDNA sequence for 22575.
SEQ ID NO:419 is the cDNA sequence for 22580.

25 SEQ ID NO:420 is the cDNA sequence for 22581.
SEQ ID NO:421 is the cDNA sequence for 22582.
SEQ ID NO:422 is the cDNA sequence for 22583.
SEQ ID NO:423 is the cDNA sequence for 22584.
SEQ ID NO:424 is the cDNA sequence for 22585.

30 SEQ ID NO:425 is the cDNA sequence for 22586.
SEQ ID NO:426 is the cDNA sequence for 22587.
SEQ ID NO:427 is the cDNA sequence for 22588.

SEQ ID NO:428 is the cDNA sequence for 22589.
SEQ ID NO:429 is the cDNA sequence for 22590.
SEQ ID NO:430 is the cDNA sequence for 22591.
SEQ ID NO:431 is the cDNA sequence for 22592.

5 SEQ ID NO:432 is the cDNA sequence for 22593.
SEQ ID NO:433 is the cDNA sequence for 22594.
SEQ ID NO:434 is the cDNA sequence for 22595.
SEQ ID NO:435 is the cDNA sequence for 22596.
SEQ ID NO:436 is the cDNA sequence for 22847.

10 SEQ ID NO:437 is the cDNA sequence for 22848.
SEQ ID NO:438 is the cDNA sequence for 22849.
SEQ ID NO:439 is the cDNA sequence for 22851.
SEQ ID NO:440 is the cDNA sequence for 22852.
SEQ ID NO:441 is the cDNA sequence for 22853.

15 SEQ ID NO:442 is the cDNA sequence for 22854.
SEQ ID NO:443 is the cDNA sequence for 22855.
SEQ ID NO:444 is the cDNA sequence for 22856.
SEQ ID NO:445 is the cDNA sequence for 22857.
SEQ ID NO:446 is the cDNA sequence for 23601.

20 SEQ ID NO:447 is the cDNA sequence for 23602.
SEQ ID NO:448 is the cDNA sequence for 23605.
SEQ ID NO:449 is the cDNA sequence for 23606.
SEQ ID NO:450 is the cDNA sequence for 23612.
SEQ ID NO:451 is the cDNA sequence for 23614.

25 SEQ ID NO:452 is the cDNA sequence for 23618.
SEQ ID NO:453 is the cDNA sequence for 23622.
SEQ ID NO:454 is the cDNA sequence for folate hydrolase.
SEQ ID NO:455 is the cDNA sequence for LIM protein.
SEQ ID NO:456 is the cDNA sequence for a known gene.

30 SEQ ID NO:457 is the cDNA sequence for a known gene.
SEQ ID NO:458 is the cDNA sequence for a previously identified gene.
SEQ ID NO:459 is the cDNA sequence for 23045.

SEQ ID NO:460 is the cDNA sequence for 23032.

SEQ ID NO:461 is the cDNA sequence for 23054.

SEQ ID NO:462-467 are cDNA sequences for known genes.

SEQ ID NO:468-471 are cDNA sequences for P710P.

5 SEQ ID NO:472 is a cDNA sequence for P1001C.

SEQ ID NO: 473 is the determined cDNA sequence for a first splice variant of P775P (referred to as 27505).

SEQ ID NO: 474 is the determined cDNA sequence for a second splice variant of P775P (referred to as 19947).

10 SEQ ID NO: 475 is the determined cDNA sequence for a third splice variant of P775P (referred to as 19941).

SEQ ID NO: 476 is the determined cDNA sequence for a fourth splice variant of P775P (referred to as 19937).

SEQ ID NO: 477 is a first predicted amino acid sequence encoded by the sequence of SEQ ID NO:

15 474.

SEQ ID NO: 478 is a second predicted amino acid sequence encoded by the sequence of SEQ ID NO: 474.

SEQ ID NO: 479 is the predicted amino acid sequence encoded by the sequence of SEQ ID NO: 475.

20 SEQ ID NO: 480 is a first predicted amino acid sequence encoded by the sequence of SEQ ID NO: 473.

SEQ ID NO: 481 is a second predicted amino acid sequence encoded by the sequence of SEQ ID NO: 473.

SEQ ID NO: 482 is a third predicted amino acid sequence encoded by the sequence of SEQ ID NO:

25 473.

SEQ ID NO: 483 is a fourth predicted amino acid sequence encoded by the sequence of SEQ ID NO: 473.

SEQ ID NO: 484 is the first 30 amino acids of the *M. tuberculosis* antigen Ra12.

SEQ ID NO: 485 is the PCR primer AW025.

30 SEQ ID NO: 486 is the PCR primer AW003.

SEQ ID NO: 487 is the PCR primer AW027.

SEQ ID NO: 488 is the PCR primer AW026.

SEQ ID NO: 489-501 are peptides employed in epitope mapping studies.

SEQ ID NO: 502 is the determined cDNA sequence of the complementarity determining region for the anti-P503S monoclonal antibody 20D4.

SEQ ID NO: 503 is the determined cDNA sequence of the complementarity determining region for 5 the anti-P503S monoclonal antibody JA1.

SEQ ID NO: 504 & 505 are peptides employed in epitope mapping studies.

SEQ ID NO: 506 is the determined cDNA sequence of the complementarity determining region for the anti-P703P monoclonal antibody 8H2.

SEQ ID NO: 507 is the determined cDNA sequence of the complementarity determining region for 10 the anti-P703P monoclonal antibody 7H8.

SEQ ID NO: 508 is the determined cDNA sequence of the complementarity determining region for the anti-P703P monoclonal antibody 2D4.

SEQ ID NO: 509-522 are peptides employed in epitope mapping studies.

SEQ ID NO: 523 is a mature form of P703P used to raise antibodies against P703P. SEQ ID NO: 15 524 is the putative full-length cDNA sequence of P703P.

SEQ ID NO: 525 is the predicted amino acid sequence encoded by SEQ ID NO: 524.

SEQ ID NO: 526 is the full-length cDNA sequence for P790P.

SEQ ID NO: 527 is the predicted amino acid sequence for P790P.

SEQ ID NO: 528 & 529 are PCR primers.

20 SEQ ID NO: 530 is the cDNA sequence of a splice variant of SEQ ID NO: 366.

SEQ ID NO: 531 is the cDNA sequence of the open reading frame of SEQ ID NO: 530.

SEQ ID NO: 532 is the predicted amino acid encoded by the sequence of SEQ ID NO: 531.

SEQ ID NO: 533 is the DNA sequence of a putative ORF of P775P.

SEQ ID NO: 534 is the predicted amino acid sequence encoded by SEQ ID NO: 533.

25 SEQ ID NO: 535 is a first full-length cDNA sequence for P510S.

SEQ ID NO: 536 is a second full-length cDNA sequence for P510S.

SEQ ID NO: 537 is the predicted amino acid sequence encoded by SEQ ID NO: 535.

SEQ ID NO: 538 is the predicted amino acid sequence encoded by SEQ ID NO: 536.

SEQ ID NO: 539 is the peptide P501S-370.

30 SEQ ID NO: 540 is the peptide P501S-376.

SEQ ID NO: 541-550 are epitopes of P501S.

SEQ ID NO: 551 corresponds to amino acids 543-553 of P501S.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

As noted above, the present invention is generally directed to compositions and methods for the therapy and diagnosis of cancer, such as prostate cancer. The compositions 5 described herein may include prostate-specific polypeptides, polynucleotides encoding such polypeptides, binding agents such as antibodies, antigen presenting cells (APCs) and/or immune system cells (e.g. T cells). Polypeptides of the present invention generally comprise at least a portion (such as an immunogenic portion) of a prostate-specific protein or a variant thereof. A "prostate-specific protein" is a protein that is expressed in normal prostate and/or prostate tumor 10 cells at a level that is at least two fold, and preferably at least five fold, greater than the level of expression in a non-prostate normal tissue, as determined using a representative assay provided herein. Certain prostate-specific proteins are proteins that react detectably (within an immunoassay, such as an ELISA or Western blot) with antisera of a patient afflicted with prostate cancer. Polynucleotides of the subject invention generally comprise a DNA or RNA sequence that encodes 15 all or a portion of such a polypeptide, or that is complementary to such a sequence. Antibodies are generally immune system proteins, or antigen-binding fragments thereof, that are capable of binding to a polypeptide as described above. Antigen presenting cells include dendritic cells, macrophages, monocytes, fibroblasts and B-cells that express a polypeptide as described above. T cells that may be employed within such compositions are generally T cells that are specific for a polypeptide as 20 described above.

The present invention is based on the discovery of human prostate-specific proteins. Sequences of polynucleotides encoding certain prostate-specific proteins, or portions thereof, are provided in SEQ ID NOS:1-111, 115-171, 173-175, 177, 179-305, 307-315, 326, 328, 330, 332-335, 340-375, 381, 382, 384-476, 524, 526, 530, 531, 533, 535 and 536. Sequences of polypeptides 25 comprising at least a portion of a prostate-specific protein are provided in SEQ ID NOS:112-114, 172, 176, 178, 327, 329, 331, 336, 339, 376-380, 383, 477-483, 496, 504, 505, 519, 520, 522, 525, 527, 532, 534 and 537-550.

PROSTATE-SPECIFIC PROTEIN POLYNUCLEOTIDES

30 Any polynucleotide that encodes a prostate-specific protein or a portion or other variant thereof as described herein is encompassed by the present invention. Preferred

polynucleotides comprise at least 15 consecutive nucleotides, preferably at least 30 consecutive nucleotides and more preferably at least 45 consecutive nucleotides, that encode a portion of a prostate-specific protein. More preferably, a polynucleotide encodes an immunogenic portion of a prostate-specific protein. Polynucleotides complementary to any such sequences are also 5 encompassed by the present invention. Polynucleotides may be single-stranded (coding or antisense) or double-stranded, and may be DNA (genomic, cDNA or synthetic) or RNA molecules. RNA molecules include hnRNA molecules, which contain introns and correspond to a DNA molecule in a one-to-one manner, and mRNA molecules, which do not contain introns. Additional coding or non-coding sequences may, but need not, be present within a polynucleotide of the 10 present invention, and a polynucleotide may, but need not, be linked to other molecules and/or support materials.

Polynucleotides may comprise a native sequence (i.e., an endogenous sequence that encodes a prostate-specific protein or a portion thereof) or may comprise a variant of such a sequence. Polynucleotide variants may contain one or more substitutions, additions, deletions 15 and/or insertions such that the immunogenicity of the encoded polypeptide is not diminished, relative to a native protein. The effect on the immunogenicity of the encoded polypeptide may generally be assessed as described herein. Variants preferably exhibit at least about 70% identity, more preferably at least about 80% identity and most preferably at least about 90% identity to a polynucleotide sequence that encodes a native prostate-specific protein or a portion thereof. The 20 term "variants" also encompasses homologous genes of xenogenic origin.

Two polynucleotide or polypeptide sequences are said to be "identical" if the sequence of nucleotides or amino acids in the two sequences is the same when aligned for maximum correspondence as described below. Comparisons between two sequences are typically performed by comparing the sequences over a comparison window to identify and compare local 25 regions of sequence similarity. A "comparison window" as used herein, refers to a segment of at least about 20 contiguous positions, usually 30 to about 75, 40 to about 50, in which a sequence may be compared to a reference sequence of the same number of contiguous positions after the two sequences are optimally aligned.

Optimal alignment of sequences for comparison may be conducted using the 30 Megalign program in the Lasergene suite of bioinformatics software (DNASTAR, Inc., Madison, WI), using default parameters. This program embodies several alignment schemes described in the following references: Dayhoff, M.O. (1978) A model of evolutionary change in proteins - Matrices

for detecting distant relationships. In Dayhoff, M.O. (ed.) *Atlas of Protein Sequence and Structure*, National Biomedical Research Foundation, Washington DC Vol. 5, Suppl. 3, pp. 345-358; Hein J. (1990) *Unified Approach to Alignment and Phylogenies* pp. 626-645 *Methods in Enzymology* vol. 183, Academic Press, Inc., San Diego, CA; Higgins, D.G. and Sharp, P.M. (1989) *CABIOS* 5:151-153; Myers, E.W. and Muller W. (1988) *CABIOS* 4:11-17; Robinson, E.D. (1971) *Comb. Theor* 11:105; Santeu, N. Nes, M. (1987) *Mol. Biol. Evol.* 4:406-425; Sneath, P.H.A. and Sokal, R.R. (1973) *Numerical Taxonomy— the Principles and Practice of Numerical Taxonomy*, Freeman Press, San Francisco, CA; Wilbur, W.J. and Lipman, D.J. (1983) *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA* 80:726-730.

Preferably, the "percentage of sequence identity" is determined by comparing two optimally aligned sequences over a window of comparison of at least 20 positions, wherein the portion of the polynucleotide or polypeptide sequence in the comparison window may comprise additions or deletions (*i.e.*, gaps) of 20 percent or less, usually 5 to 15 percent, or 10 to 12 percent, as compared to the reference sequences (which does not comprise additions or deletions) for optimal alignment of the two sequences. The percentage is calculated by determining the number of positions at which the identical nucleic acid bases or amino acid residue occurs in both sequences to yield the number of matched positions, dividing the number of matched positions by the total number of positions in the reference sequence (*i.e.*, the window size) and multiplying the results by 100 to yield the percentage of sequence identity.

Variants may also, or alternatively, be substantially homologous to a native gene, or a portion or complement thereof. Such polynucleotide variants are capable of hybridizing under moderately stringent conditions to a naturally occurring DNA sequence encoding a native prostate-specific protein (or a complementary sequence). Suitable moderately stringent conditions include prewashing in a solution of 5 X SSC, 0.5% SDS, 1.0 mM EDTA (pH 8.0); hybridizing at 50°C-65°C, 5 X SSC, overnight; followed by washing twice at 65°C for 20 minutes with each of 2X, 0.5X and 0.2X SSC containing 0.1% SDS.

It will be appreciated by those of ordinary skill in the art that, as a result of the degeneracy of the genetic code, there are many nucleotide sequences that encode a polypeptide as described herein. Some of these polynucleotides bear minimal homology to the nucleotide sequence of any native gene. Nonetheless, polynucleotides that vary due to differences in codon usage are specifically contemplated by the present invention. Further, alleles of the genes comprising the polynucleotide sequences provided herein are within the scope of the present invention. Alleles are endogenous genes that are altered as a result of one or more mutations, such

as deletions, additions and/or substitutions of nucleotides. The resulting mRNA and protein may, but need not, have an altered structure or function. Alleles may be identified using standard techniques (such as hybridization, amplification and/or database sequence comparison).

Polynucleotides may be prepared using any of a variety of techniques. For example, 5 a polynucleotide may be identified, as described in more detail below, by screening a microarray of cDNAs for tumor-associated expression (*i.e.*, expression that is at least five fold greater in a prostate-specific than in normal tissue, as determined using a representative assay provided herein). Such screens may be performed using a Synteni microarray (Palo Alto, CA) according to the manufacturer's instructions (and essentially as described by Schena et al., *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. 10 USA* 93:10614-10619, 1996 and Heller et al., *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA* 94:2150-2155, 1997). Alternatively, polypeptides may be amplified from cDNA prepared from cells expressing the proteins described herein, such as prostate-specific cells. Such polynucleotides may be amplified via polymerase chain reaction (PCR). For this approach, sequence-specific primers may be 15 designed based on the sequences provided herein, and may be purchased or synthesized.

15 An amplified portion may be used to isolate a full length gene from a suitable library (*e.g.*, a prostate-specific cDNA library) using well known techniques. Within such techniques, a library (cDNA or genomic) is screened using one or more polynucleotide probes or primers suitable for amplification. Preferably, a library is size-selected to include larger molecules. Random primed libraries may also be preferred for identifying 5' and upstream regions of genes. 20 Genomic libraries are preferred for obtaining introns and extending 5' sequences.

For hybridization techniques, a partial sequence may be labeled (*e.g.*, by nick-translation or end-labeling with ^{32}P) using well known techniques. A bacterial or bacteriophage library is then screened by hybridizing filters containing denatured bacterial colonies (or lawns containing phage plaques) with the labeled probe (see Sambrook et al., *Molecular Cloning: A 25 Laboratory Manual*, Cold Spring Harbor Laboratories, Cold Spring Harbor, NY, 1989). Hybridizing colonies or plaques are selected and expanded, and the DNA is isolated for further analysis. cDNA clones may be analyzed to determine the amount of additional sequence by, for example, PCR using a primer from the partial sequence and a primer from the vector. Restriction maps and partial sequences may be generated to identify one or more overlapping clones. The 30 complete sequence may then be determined using standard techniques, which may involve generating a series of deletion clones. The resulting overlapping sequences are then assembled into

a single contiguous sequence. A full length cDNA molecule can be generated by ligating suitable fragments, using well known techniques.

Alternatively, there are numerous amplification techniques for obtaining a full length coding sequence from a partial cDNA sequence. Within such techniques, amplification is generally 5 performed via PCR. Any of a variety of commercially available kits may be used to perform the amplification step. Primers may be designed using, for example, software well known in the art. Primers are preferably 22-30 nucleotides in length, have a GC content of at least 50% and anneal to the target sequence at temperatures of about 68°C to 72°C. The amplified region may be sequenced as described above, and overlapping sequences assembled into a contiguous sequence.

10 One such amplification technique is inverse PCR (see Triglia et al., *Nucl. Acids Res.* 16:8186, 1988), which uses restriction enzymes to generate a fragment in the known region of the gene. The fragment is then circularized by intramolecular ligation and used as a template for PCR with divergent primers derived from the known region. Within an alternative approach, sequences 15 adjacent to a partial sequence may be retrieved by amplification with a primer to a linker sequence and a primer specific to a known region. The amplified sequences are typically subjected to a second round of amplification with the same linker primer and a second primer specific to the known region. A variation on this procedure, which employs two primers that initiate extension in opposite directions from the known sequence, is described in WO 96/38591. Another such technique is known as "rapid amplification of cDNA ends" or RACE. This technique involves the 20 use of an internal primer and an external primer, which hybridizes to a polyA region or vector sequence, to identify sequences that are 5' and 3' of a known sequence. Additional techniques include capture PCR (Lagerstrom et al., *PCR Methods Appl.* 1:111-19, 1991) and walking PCR (Parker et al., *Nucl. Acids. Res.* 19:3055-60, 1991). Other methods employing amplification may 25 also be employed to obtain a full length cDNA sequence.

25 In certain instances, it is possible to obtain a full length cDNA sequence by analysis of sequences provided in an expressed sequence tag (EST) database, such as that available from GenBank. Searches for overlapping ESTs may generally be performed using well known programs (e.g., NCBI BLAST searches), and such ESTs may be used to generate a contiguous full length sequence. Full length DNA sequences may also be obtained by analysis of genomic fragments.

30 Certain nucleic acid sequences of cDNA molecules encoding at least a portion of a prostate-specific protein are provided in SEQ ID NO:1-111, 115-171, 173-175, 177, 179-305, 307-315, 326, 328, 330, 332-335, 340-375, 381, 382, 384-476, 524, 526, 530, 531, 533, 535 and 536.

Isolation of these polynucleotides is described below. Each of these prostate-specific proteins was overexpressed in prostate tumor tissue.

Polynucleotide variants may generally be prepared by any method known in the art, including chemical synthesis by, for example, solid phase phosphoramidite chemical synthesis. 5 Modifications in a polynucleotide sequence may also be introduced using standard mutagenesis techniques, such as oligonucleotide-directed site-specific mutagenesis (see Adelman et al., *DNA* 2:183, 1983). Alternatively, RNA molecules may be generated by *in vitro* or *in vivo* transcription of DNA sequences encoding a prostate-specific protein, or portion thereof, provided that the DNA is incorporated into a vector with a suitable RNA polymerase promoter (such as T7 or SP6). Certain 10 portions may be used to prepare an encoded polypeptide, as described herein. In addition, or alternatively, a portion may be administered to a patient such that the encoded polypeptide is generated *in vivo* (e.g., by transfecting antigen-presenting cells, such as dendritic cells, with a cDNA construct encoding a prostate-specific polypeptide, and administering the transfected cells to the patient).

15 A portion of a sequence complementary to a coding sequence (i.e., an antisense polynucleotide) may also be used as a probe or to modulate gene expression. cDNA constructs that can be transcribed into antisense RNA may also be introduced into cells of tissues to facilitate the production of antisense RNA. An antisense polynucleotide may be used, as described herein, to inhibit expression of a protein. Antisense technology can be used to control gene expression 20 through triple-helix formation, which compromises the ability of the double helix to open sufficiently for the binding of polymerases, transcription factors or regulatory molecules (see Gee et al., *In Huber and Carr, Molecular and Immunologic Approaches*, Futura Publishing Co. (Mt. Kisco, NY; 1994)). Alternatively, an antisense molecule may be designed to hybridize with a control region of a gene (e.g., promoter, enhancer or transcription initiation site), and block transcription of 25 the gene; or to block translation by inhibiting binding of a transcript to ribosomes.

30 A portion of a coding sequence, or of a complementary sequence, may also be designed as a probe or primer to detect gene expression. Probes may be labeled with a variety of reporter groups, such as radionuclides and enzymes, and are preferably at least 10 nucleotides in length, more preferably at least 20 nucleotides in length and still more preferably at least 30 nucleotides in length. Primers, as noted above, are preferably 22-30 nucleotides in length.

Any polynucleotide may be further modified to increase stability *in vivo*. Possible modifications include, but are not limited to, the addition of flanking sequences at the 5' and/or 3'

ends; the use of phosphorothioate or 2' O-methyl rather than phosphodiesterate linkages in the backbone; and/or the inclusion of nontraditional bases such as inosine, queosine and wybutosine, as well as acetyl-, methyl-, thio- and other modified forms of adenine, cytidine, guanine, thymine and uridine.

5 Nucleotide sequences as described herein may be joined to a variety of other nucleotide sequences using established recombinant DNA techniques. For example, a polynucleotide may be cloned into any of a variety of cloning vectors, including plasmids, phagemids, lambda phage derivatives and cosmids. Vectors of particular interest include expression vectors, replication vectors, probe generation vectors and sequencing vectors. In general, a vector
10 will contain an origin of replication functional in at least one organism, convenient restriction endonuclease sites and one or more selectable markers. Other elements will depend upon the desired use, and will be apparent to those of ordinary skill in the art.

Within certain embodiments, polynucleotides may be formulated so as to permit entry into a cell of a mammal, and expression therein. Such formulations are particularly useful for
15 therapeutic purposes, as described below. Those of ordinary skill in the art will appreciate that there are many ways to achieve expression of a polynucleotide in a target cell, and any suitable method may be employed. For example, a polynucleotide may be incorporated into a viral vector such as, but not limited to, adenovirus, adeno-associated virus, retrovirus, or vaccinia or other pox virus (e.g., avian pox virus). The polynucleotides may also be administered as naked plasmid vectors.
20 Techniques for incorporating DNA into such vectors are well known to those of ordinary skill in the art. A retroviral vector may additionally transfer or incorporate a gene for a selectable marker (to aid in the identification or selection of transduced cells) and/or a targeting moiety, such as a gene that encodes a ligand for a receptor on a specific target cell, to render the vector target specific. Targeting may also be accomplished using an antibody, by methods known to those of ordinary
25 skill in the art.

Other formulations for therapeutic purposes include colloidal dispersion systems, such as macromolecule complexes, nanocapsules, microspheres, beads, and lipid-based systems including oil-in-water emulsions, micelles, mixed micelles, and liposomes. A preferred colloidal system for use as a delivery vehicle *in vitro* and *in vivo* is a liposome (*i.e.*, an artificial membrane
30 vesicle). The preparation and use of such systems is well known in the art.

PROSTATE-SPECIFIC POLYPEPTIDES

Within the context of the present invention, polypeptides may comprise at least an immunogenic portion of a prostate-specific protein or a variant thereof, as described herein. As noted above, a "prostate-specific protein" is a protein that is expressed by normal prostate and/or prostate tumor cells. Proteins that are prostate-specific proteins also react detectably within an immunoassay (such as an ELISA) with antisera from a patient with prostate cancer. Polypeptides as described herein may be of any length. Additional sequences derived from the native protein and/or heterologous sequences may be present, and such sequences may (but need not) possess further immunogenic or antigenic properties.

An "immunogenic portion," as used herein is a portion of a protein that is recognized (i.e., specifically bound) by a B-cell and/or T-cell surface antigen receptor. Such immunogenic portions generally comprise at least 5 amino acid residues, more preferably at least 10, and still more preferably at least 20 amino acid residues of a prostate-specific protein or a variant thereof. Certain preferred immunogenic portions include peptides in which an N-terminal leader sequence and/or transmembrane domain have been deleted. Other preferred immunogenic portions may contain a small N- and/or C-terminal deletion (e.g., 1-30 amino acids, preferably 5-15 amino acids), relative to the mature protein.

Immunogenic portions may generally be identified using well known techniques, such as those summarized in Paul, *Fundamental Immunology*, 3rd ed., 243-247 (Raven Press, 1993) and references cited therein. Such techniques include screening polypeptides for the ability to react with antigen-specific antibodies, antisera and/or T-cell lines or clones. As used herein, antisera and antibodies are "antigen-specific" if they specifically bind to an antigen (i.e., they react with the protein in an ELISA or other immunoassay, and do not react detectably with unrelated proteins). Such antisera and antibodies may be prepared as described herein, and using well known techniques. An immunogenic portion of a native prostate-specific protein is a portion that reacts with such antisera and/or T-cells at a level that is not substantially less than the reactivity of the full length polypeptide (e.g., in an ELISA and/or T-cell reactivity assay). Such immunogenic portions may react within such assays at a level that is similar to or greater than the reactivity of the full length polypeptide. Such screens may generally be performed using methods well known to those of ordinary skill in the art, such as those described in Harlow and Lane, *Antibodies: A Laboratory Manual*, Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, 1988. For example, a polypeptide may be immobilized on a solid support and contacted with patient sera to allow binding of antibodies within the sera to the

immobilized polypeptide. Unbound sera may then be removed and bound antibodies detected using, for example, ¹²⁵I-labeled Protein A.

As noted above, a composition may comprise a variant of a native prostate-specific protein. A polypeptide "variant," as used herein, is a polypeptide that differs from a native prostate-specific protein in one or more substitutions, deletions, additions and/or insertions, such that the immunogenicity of the polypeptide is not substantially diminished. In other words, the ability of a variant to react with antigen-specific antisera may be enhanced or unchanged, relative to the native protein, or may be diminished by less than 50%, and preferably less than 20%, relative to the native protein. Such variants may generally be identified by modifying one of the above polypeptide sequences and evaluating the reactivity of the modified polypeptide with antigen-specific antibodies or antisera as described herein. Preferred variants include those in which one or more portions, such as an N-terminal leader sequence or transmembrane domain, have been removed. Other preferred variants include variants in which a small portion (e.g., 1-30 amino acids, preferably 5-15 amino acids) has been removed from the N- and/or C-terminal of the mature protein. Polypeptide variants preferably exhibit at least about 70%, more preferably at least about 90% and most preferably at least about 95% identity (determined as described above) to the identified polypeptides.

Preferably, a variant contains conservative substitutions. A "conservative substitution" is one in which an amino acid is substituted for another amino acid that has similar properties, such that one skilled in the art of peptide chemistry would expect the secondary structure and hydrophobic nature of the polypeptide to be substantially unchanged. Amino acid substitutions may generally be made on the basis of similarity in polarity, charge, solubility, hydrophobicity, hydrophilicity and/or the amphipathic nature of the residues. For example, negatively charged amino acids include aspartic acid and glutamic acid; positively charged amino acids include lysine and arginine; and amino acids with uncharged polar head groups having similar hydrophilicity values include leucine, isoleucine and valine; glycine and alanine; asparagine and glutamine; and serine, threonine, phenylalanine and tyrosine. Other groups of amino acids that may represent conservative changes include: (1) ala, pro, gly, glu, asp, gln, asn, ser, thr; (2) cys, ser, tyr, thr; (3) val, ile, leu, met, ala, phe; (4) lys, arg, his; and (5) phe, tyr, trp, his. A variant may also, or alternatively, contain nonconservative changes. In a preferred embodiment, variant polypeptides differ from a native sequence by substitution, deletion or addition of five amino acids or fewer. Variants may also (or alternatively) be modified by, for example, the deletion or addition of amino

acids that have minimal influence on the immunogenicity, secondary structure and hydrophobic nature of the polypeptide.

As noted above, polypeptides may comprise a signal (or leader) sequence at the N-terminal end of the protein which co-translationally or post-translationally directs transfer of the protein. The polypeptide may also be conjugated to a linker or other sequence for ease of synthesis, purification or identification of the polypeptide (e.g., poly-His), or to enhance binding of the polypeptide to a solid support. For example, a polypeptide may be conjugated to an immunoglobulin Fc region.

Polypeptides may be prepared using any of a variety of well known techniques.

- 10 Recombinant polypeptides encoded by DNA sequences as described above may be readily prepared from the DNA sequences using any of a variety of expression vectors known to those of ordinary skill in the art. Expression may be achieved in any appropriate host cell that has been transformed or transfected with an expression vector containing a DNA molecule that encodes a recombinant polypeptide. Suitable host cells include prokaryotes, yeast, higher eukaryotic and plant cells.
- 15 Preferably, the host cells employed are *E. coli*, yeast or a mammalian cell line such as COS or CHO. Supernatants from suitable host/vector systems which secrete recombinant protein or polypeptide into culture media may be first concentrated using a commercially available filter. Following concentration, the concentrate may be applied to a suitable purification matrix such as an affinity matrix or an ion exchange resin. Finally, one or more reverse phase HPLC steps can be employed
- 20 to further purify a recombinant polypeptide.

Portions and other variants having fewer than about 100 amino acids, and generally fewer than about 50 amino acids, may also be generated by synthetic means, using techniques well known to those of ordinary skill in the art. For example, such polypeptides may be synthesized using any of the commercially available solid-phase techniques, such as the Merrifield solid-phase synthesis method, where amino acids are sequentially added to a growing amino acid chain. See Merrifield, *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* 85:2149-2146, 1963. Equipment for automated synthesis of polypeptides is commercially available from suppliers such as Perkin Elmer/Applied BioSystems Division (Foster City, CA), and may be operated according to the manufacturer's instructions.

Within certain specific embodiments, a polypeptide may be a fusion protein that

- 30 comprises multiple polypeptides as described herein, or that comprises at least one polypeptide as described herein and an unrelated sequence, such as a known prostate-specific protein. A fusion partner may, for example, assist in providing T helper epitopes (an immunological fusion partner).

preferably T helper epitopes recognized by humans, or may assist in expressing the protein (an expression enhancer) at higher yields than the native recombinant protein. Certain preferred fusion partners are both immunological and expression enhancing fusion partners. Other fusion partners may be selected so as to increase the solubility of the protein or to enable the protein to be targeted 5 to desired intracellular compartments. Still further fusion partners include affinity tags, which facilitate purification of the protein.

Fusion proteins may generally be prepared using standard techniques, including chemical conjugation. Preferably, a fusion protein is expressed as a recombinant protein, allowing the production of increased levels, relative to a non-fused protein, in an expression system. Briefly, 10 DNA sequences encoding the polypeptide components may be assembled separately, and ligated into an appropriate expression vector. The 3' end of the DNA sequence encoding one polypeptide component is ligated, with or without a peptide linker, to the 5' end of a DNA sequence encoding the second polypeptide component so that the reading frames of the sequences are in phase. This permits translation into a single fusion protein that retains the biological activity of both component 15 polypeptides.

A peptide linker sequence may be employed to separate the first and the second polypeptide components by a distance sufficient to ensure that each polypeptide folds into its secondary and tertiary structures. Such a peptide linker sequence is incorporated into the fusion protein using standard techniques well known in the art. Suitable peptide linker sequences may be 20 chosen based on the following factors: (1) their ability to adopt a flexible extended conformation; (2) their inability to adopt a secondary structure that could interact with functional epitopes on the first and second polypeptides; and (3) the lack of hydrophobic or charged residues that might react with the polypeptide functional epitopes. Preferred peptide linker sequences contain Gly, Asn and Ser residues. Other near neutral amino acids, such as Thr and Ala may also be used in the linker 25 sequence. Amino acid sequences which may be usefully employed as linkers include those disclosed in Maratea et al., *Gene* 40:39-46, 1985; Murphy et al., *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA* 83:8258-8262, 1986; U.S. Patent No. 4,935,233 and U.S. Patent No. 4,751,180. The linker sequence may generally be from 1 to about 50 amino acids in length. Linker sequences are not required when the first and second polypeptides have non-essential N-terminal amino acid regions 30 that can be used to separate the functional domains and prevent steric interference.

The ligated DNA sequences are operably linked to suitable transcriptional or translational regulatory elements. The regulatory elements responsible for expression of DNA are

located only 5' to the DNA sequence encoding the first polypeptides. Similarly, stop codons required to end translation and transcription termination signals are only present 3' to the DNA sequence encoding the second polypeptide.

Fusion proteins are also provided that comprise a polypeptide of the present invention together with an unrelated immunogenic protein. Preferably the immunogenic protein is capable of eliciting a recall response. Examples of such proteins include tetanus, tuberculosis and hepatitis proteins (see, for example, Stout et al. *New Engl. J. Med.*, 336:86-91, 1997).

Within preferred embodiments, an immunological fusion partner is derived from protein D, a surface protein of the gram-negative bacterium *Haemophilus influenzae* B (WO 91/18926). Preferably, a protein D derivative comprises approximately the first third of the protein (e.g., the first N-terminal 100-110 amino acids), and a protein D derivative may be lipidated. Within certain preferred embodiments, the first 109 residues of a Lipoprotein D fusion partner is included on the N-terminus to provide the polypeptide with additional exogenous T-cell epitopes and to increase the expression level in *E. coli* (thus functioning as an expression enhancer). The lipid tail ensures optimal presentation of the antigen to antigen presenting cells. Other fusion partners include the non-structural protein from influenzae virus, NS1 (hemagglutinin). Typically, the N-terminal 81 amino acids are used, although different fragments that include T-helper epitopes may be used.

In another embodiment, the immunological fusion partner is the protein known as LYTA, or a portion thereof (preferably a C-terminal portion). LYTA is derived from *Streptococcus pneumoniae*, which synthesizes an N-acetyl-L-alanine amidase known as amidase LYTA (encoded by the *l.ytA* gene; *Gene* 43:265-292, 1986). LYTA is an autolysin that specifically degrades certain bonds in the peptidoglycan backbone. The C-terminal domain of the LYTA protein is responsible for the affinity to the choline or to some choline analogues such as DEAE. This property has been exploited for the development of *E. coli* C-LYTA expressing plasmids useful for expression of fusion proteins. Purification of hybrid proteins containing the C-LYTA fragment at the amino terminus has been described (see *Biotechnology* 10:795-798, 1992). Within a preferred embodiment, a repeat portion of LYTA may be incorporated into a fusion protein. A repeat portion is found in the C-terminal region starting at residue 178. A particularly preferred repeat portion incorporates residues 188-305.

In general, polypeptides (including fusion proteins) and polynucleotides as described herein are isolated. An "isolated" polypeptide or polynucleotide is one that is removed from its

original environment. For example, a naturally-occurring protein is isolated if it is separated from some or all of the coexisting materials in the natural system. Preferably, such polypeptides are at least about 90% pure, more preferably at least about 95% pure and most preferably at least about 99% pure. A polynucleotide is considered to be isolated if, for example, it is cloned into a vector 5 that is not a part of the natural environment.

BINDING AGENTS

The present invention further provides agents, such as antibodies and antigen-binding fragments thereof, that specifically bind to a prostate-specific protein. As used herein, an 10 antibody, or antigen-binding fragment thereof, is said to "specifically bind" to a prostate-specific protein if it reacts at a detectable level (within, for example, an ELISA) with a prostate-specific protein, and does not react detectably with unrelated proteins under similar conditions. As used herein, "binding" refers to a noncovalent association between two separate molecules such that a 15 complex is formed. The ability to bind may be evaluated by, for example, determining a binding constant for the formation of the complex. The binding constant is the value obtained when the concentration of the complex is divided by the product of the component concentrations. In general, two compounds are said to "bind," in the context of the present invention, when the binding constant for complex formation exceeds about 10^3 L/mol. The binding constant may be determined using methods well known in the art.

20 Binding agents may be further capable of differentiating between patients with and without a cancer, such as prostate cancer, using the representative assays provided herein. In other words, antibodies or other binding agents that bind to a prostate-specific protein will generate a signal indicating the presence of a cancer in at least about 20% of patients with the disease, and will generate a negative signal indicating the absence of the disease in at least about 90% of individuals 25 without the cancer. To determine whether a binding agent satisfies this requirement, biological samples (e.g., blood, sera, urine and/or tumor biopsies) from patients with and without a cancer (as determined using standard clinical tests) may be assayed as described herein for the presence of polypeptides that bind to the binding agent. It will be apparent that a statistically significant number of samples with and without the disease should be assayed. Each binding agent should satisfy the 30 above criteria, however, those of ordinary skill in the art will recognize that binding agents may be used in combination to improve sensitivity.

Any agent that satisfies the above requirements may be a binding agent. For example, a binding agent may be a ribosome, with or without a peptide component, an RNA molecule or a polypeptide. In a preferred embodiment, a binding agent is an antibody or an antigen-binding fragment thereof. Most preferably, antibodies employed in the inventive methods have the ability to induce lysis of tumor cells by activation of complement and mediation of antibody-dependent cellular cytotoxicity (ADCC). Antibodies of different classes and subclasses differ in these properties. For example, mouse antibodies of the IgG2a and IgG3 classes are capable of activating serum complement upon binding to target cells which express the antigen against which the antibodies were raised, and can mediate ADCC.

Antibodies may be prepared by any of a variety of techniques known to those of ordinary skill in the art. See, e.g., Harlow and Lane, *Antibodies: A Laboratory Manual*, Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, 1988. In general, antibodies can be produced by cell culture techniques, including the generation of monoclonal antibodies as described herein, or via transfection of antibody genes into suitable bacterial or mammalian cell hosts, in order to allow for the production of recombinant antibodies. In one technique, an immunogen comprising the polypeptide is initially injected into any of a wide variety of mammals (e.g., mice, rats, rabbits, sheep or goats). In this step, the polypeptides of this invention may serve as the immunogen without modification. Alternatively, particularly for relatively short polypeptides, a superior immune response may be elicited if the polypeptide is joined to a carrier protein, such as bovine serum albumin or keyhole limpet hemocyanin. The immunogen is injected into the animal host, preferably according to a predetermined schedule incorporating one or more booster immunizations, and the animals are bled periodically. Polyclonal antibodies specific for the polypeptide may then be purified from such antisera by, for example, affinity chromatography using the polypeptide coupled to a suitable solid support.

Monoclonal antibodies specific for an antigenic polypeptide of interest may be prepared, for example, using the technique of Kohler and Milstein, *Eur. J. Immunol.* 6:511-519, 1976, and improvements thereto. Briefly, these methods involve the preparation of immortal cell lines capable of producing antibodies having the desired specificity (i.e., reactivity with the polypeptide of interest). Such cell lines may be produced, for example, from spleen cells obtained from an animal immunized as described above. The spleen cells are then immortalized by, for example, fusion with a myeloma cell fusion partner, preferably one that is syngeneic with the immunized animal. A variety of fusion techniques may be employed. For example, the spleen cells

and myeloma cells may be combined with a nonionic detergent for a few minutes and then plated at low density on a selective medium that supports the growth of hybrid cells, but not myeloma cells. A preferred selection technique uses HAT (hypoxanthine, aminopterin, thymidine) selection. After a sufficient time, usually about 1 to 2 weeks, colonies of hybrids are observed. Single colonies are 5 selected and their culture supernatants tested for binding activity against the polypeptide. Hybridomas having high reactivity and specificity are preferred.

Monoclonal antibodies may be isolated from the supernatants of growing hybridoma colonies. In addition, various techniques may be employed to enhance the yield, such as injection of the hybridoma cell line into the peritoneal cavity of a suitable vertebrate host, such as a mouse. 10 Monoclonal antibodies may then be harvested from the ascites fluid or the blood. Contaminants may be removed from the antibodies by conventional techniques, such as chromatography, gel filtration, precipitation, and extraction. The polypeptides of this invention may be used in the purification process in, for example, an affinity chromatography step.

The preparation of mouse and rabbit monoclonal antibodies that specifically bind to 15 polypeptides of the present invention is described in detail below. However, the antibodies of the present invention are not limited to those derived from mice. Human antibodies may also be employed in the inventive methods and may prove to be preferable. Such antibodies can be obtained using human hybridomas as described by Cote *et al.* (*Monoclonal Antibodies and Cancer Therapy*, Alan R. Liss, p. 77, 1985). The present invention also encompasses antibodies made by 20 recombinant means such as chimeric antibodies, wherein the variable region and constant region are derived from different species, and CDR-grafted antibodies, wherein the complementarity determining region is derived from a different species, as described in US Patents 4,816,567 and 5,225,539. Chimeric antibodies may be prepared by splicing genes for a mouse antibody molecule having a desired antigen specificity together with genes for a human antibody molecule having the 25 desired biological activity, such as activation of human complement and mediation of ADCC (Morrison *et al.* *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA* 81:6851, 1984; Neuberger *et al.* *Nature* 312:604, 1984; Takeda *et al.* *Nature* 314:452, 1985).

Within certain embodiments, the use of antigen-binding fragments of antibodies may 30 be preferred. Such fragments include Fab fragments, which may be prepared using standard techniques. Briefly, immunoglobulins may be purified from rabbit serum by affinity chromatography on Protein A bead columns (Harlow and Lane, *Antibodies: A Laboratory Manual*,

Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, 1988) and digested by papain to yield Fab and Fc fragments. The Fab and Fc fragments may be separated by affinity chromatography on protein A bead columns.

Monoclonal antibodies of the present invention may be coupled to one or more therapeutic agents. Suitable agents in this regard include radionuclides, differentiation inducers, 5 drugs, toxins, and derivatives thereof. Preferred radionuclides include ⁹⁰Y, ¹³¹I, ¹²⁵I, ¹¹³I, ¹⁸⁶Re, ¹⁸⁸Re, ²¹¹At, and ²¹²Bi. Preferred drugs include methotrexate, and pyrimidine and purine analogs. Preferred differentiation inducers include phorbol esters and butyric acid. Preferred toxins include ricin, abrin, diphtheria toxin, cholera toxin, gelonin, *Pseudomonas* exotoxin, *Shigella* toxin, and pokeweed antiviral protein.

10 A therapeutic agent may be coupled (e.g., covalently bonded) to a suitable monoclonal antibody either directly or indirectly (e.g., via a linker group). A direct reaction between an agent and an antibody is possible when each possesses a substituent capable of reacting with the other. For example, a nucleophilic group, such as an amino or sulfhydryl group, on one 15 may be capable of reacting with a carbonyl-containing group, such as an anhydride or an acid halide, or with an alkyl group containing a good leaving group (e.g., a halide) on the other.

Alternatively, it may be desirable to couple a therapeutic agent and an antibody via a 20 linker group. A linker group can function as a spacer to distance an antibody from an agent in order to avoid interference with binding capabilities. A linker group can also serve to increase the chemical reactivity of a substituent on an agent or an antibody, and thus increase the coupling efficiency. An increase in chemical reactivity may also facilitate the use of agents, or functional 25 groups on agents, which otherwise would not be possible.

It will be evident to those skilled in the art that a variety of bifunctional or polyfunctional reagents, both homo- and hetero-functional (such as those described in the catalog of the Pierce Chemical Co., Rockford, IL), may be employed as the linker group. Coupling may be 25 effected, for example, through amino groups, carboxyl groups, sulfhydryl groups or oxidized carbohydrate residues. There are numerous references describing such methodology, e.g., U.S. Patent No. 4,671,958, to Rodwell et al.

30 Where a therapeutic agent is more potent when free from the antibody portion of the immunoconjugates of the present invention, it may be desirable to use a linker group which is cleavable during or upon internalization into a cell. A number of different cleavable linker groups have been described. The mechanisms for the intracellular release of an agent from these linker groups include cleavage by reduction of a disulfide bond (e.g., U.S. Patent No. 4,489,710, to

Spitler), by irradiation of a photolabile bond (e.g., U.S. Patent No. 4,625,014, to Senter et al.), by hydrolysis of derivatized amino acid side chains (e.g., U.S. Patent No. 4,638,045, to Kohn et al.), by serum complement-mediated hydrolysis (e.g., U.S. Patent No. 4,671,958, to Rodwell et al.), and acid-catalyzed hydrolysis (e.g., U.S. Patent No. 4,569,789, to Blattler et al.).

5 It may be desirable to couple more than one agent to an antibody. In one embodiment, multiple molecules of an agent are coupled to one antibody molecule. In another embodiment, more than one type of agent may be coupled to one antibody. Regardless of the particular embodiment, immunoconjugates with more than one agent may be prepared in a variety of ways. For example, more than one agent may be coupled directly to an antibody molecule, or
10 linkers which provide multiple sites for attachment can be used. Alternatively, a carrier can be used.

A carrier may bear the agents in a variety of ways, including covalent bonding either directly or via a linker group. Suitable carriers include proteins such as albumins (e.g., U.S. Patent No. 4,507,234, to Kato et al.), peptides and polysaccharides such as aminodextran (e.g., U.S. Patent
15 No. 4,699,784, to Shih et al.). A carrier may also bear an agent by noncovalent bonding or by encapsulation, such as within a liposome vesicle (e.g., U.S. Patent Nos. 4,429,008 and 4,873,088). Carriers specific for radionuclide agents include radiohalogenated small molecules and chelating compounds. For example, U.S. Patent No. 4,735,792 discloses representative radiohalogenated small molecules and their synthesis. A radionuclide chelate may be formed from chelating
20 compounds that include those containing nitrogen and sulfur atoms as the donor atoms for binding the metal, or metal oxide, radionuclide. For example, U.S. Patent No. 4,673,562, to Davison et al. discloses representative chelating compounds and their synthesis.

A variety of routes of administration for the antibodies and immunoconjugates may be used. Typically, administration will be intravenous, intramuscular, subcutaneous or in the bed of
25 a resected tumor. It will be evident that the precise dose of the antibody/immunoconjugate will vary depending upon the antibody used, the antigen density on the tumor, and the rate of clearance of the antibody.

T CELLS

30 Immunotherapeutic compositions may also, or alternatively, comprise T cells specific for a prostate-specific protein. Such cells may generally be prepared *in vitro* or *ex vivo*, using standard procedures. For example, T cells may be isolated from bone marrow, peripheral

blood, or a fraction of bone marrow or peripheral blood of a patient, using a commercially available cell separation system, such as the ISOLEX™ system, available from Nexell Therapeutics Inc., Irvine, CA (see also U.S. Patent No. 5,240,856; U.S. Patent No. 5,215,926; WO 89/06280; WO 91/16116 and WO 92/07243). Alternatively, T cells may be derived from related or unrelated 5 humans, non-human mammals, cell lines or cultures.

T cells may be stimulated with a prostate-specific polypeptide, polynucleotide encoding a prostate-specific polypeptide and/or an antigen presenting cell (APC) that expresses such a polypeptide. Such stimulation is performed under conditions and for a time sufficient to permit the generation of T cells that are specific for the polypeptide. Preferably, a prostate-specific 10 polypeptide or polynucleotide is present within a delivery vehicle, such as a microsphere, to facilitate the generation of specific T cells.

T cells are considered to be specific for a prostate-specific polypeptide if the T cells specifically proliferate, secrete cytokines or kill target cells coated with the polypeptide or expressing a gene encoding the polypeptide. T cell specificity may be evaluated using any of a 15 variety of standard techniques. For example, within a chromium release assay or proliferation assay, a stimulation index of more than two fold increase in lysis and/or proliferation, compared to negative controls, indicates T cell specificity. Such assays may be performed, for example, as described in Chen et al., *Cancer Res.* 54:1065-1070, 1994. Alternatively, detection of the proliferation of T cells may be accomplished by a variety of known techniques. For example, T cell 20 proliferation can be detected by measuring an increased rate of DNA synthesis (e.g., by pulse-labeling cultures of T cells with tritiated thymidine and measuring the amount of tritiated thymidine incorporated into DNA). Contact with a prostate-specific polypeptide (100 ng/ml - 100 µg/ml, preferably 200 ng/ml - 25 µg/ml) for 3 - 7 days should result in at least a two fold increase in proliferation of the T cells. Contact as described above for 2-3 hours should result in activation of 25 the T cells, as measured using standard cytokine assays in which a two fold increase in the level of cytokine release (e.g., TNF or IFN- γ) is indicative of T cell activation (see Coligan et al., *Current Protocols in Immunology*, vol. 1, Wiley Interscience (Greene 1998)). T cells that have been activated in response to a prostate-specific polypeptide, polynucleotide or polypeptide-expressing 30 APC may be CD4 $^{+}$ and/or CD8 $^{+}$. Prostate-specific protein-specific T cells may be expanded using standard techniques. Within preferred embodiments, the T cells are derived from either a patient or a related, or unrelated, donor and are administered to the patient following stimulation and expansion.

For therapeutic purposes, CD4⁺ or CD8⁺ T cells that proliferate in response to a prostate-specific polypeptide, polynucleotide or APC can be expanded in number either *in vitro* or *in vivo*. Proliferation of such T cells *in vitro* may be accomplished in a variety of ways. For example, the T cells can be re-exposed to a prostate-specific polypeptide, or a short peptide 5 corresponding to an immunogenic portion of such a polypeptide, with or without the addition of T cell growth factors, such as interleukin-2, and/or stimulator cells that synthesize a prostate-specific polypeptide. Alternatively, one or more T cells that proliferate in the presence of a prostate-specific protein can be expanded in number by cloning. Methods for cloning cells are well known in the art, and include limiting dilution.

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PHARMACEUTICAL COMPOSITIONS AND VACCINES

Within certain aspects, polypeptides, polynucleotides, T cells and/or binding agents disclosed herein may be incorporated into pharmaceutical compositions or immunogenic compositions (i.e., vaccines). Pharmaceutical compositions comprise one or more such compounds 15 and a physiologically acceptable carrier. Vaccines may comprise one or more such compounds and an immunostimulant. An immunostimulant may be any substance that enhances an immune response to an exogenous antigen. Examples of immunostimulants include adjuvants, biodegradable microspheres (e.g., polylactic galactide) and liposomes (into which the compound is incorporated; *see e.g.* Fullerton, U.S. Patent No. 4,235,877). Vaccine preparation is generally 20 described in, for example, M.F. Powell and M.J. Newman, eds., "Vaccine Design (the subunit and adjuvant approach)," Plenum Press (NY, 1995). Pharmaceutical compositions and vaccines within the scope of the present invention may also contain other compounds, which may be biologically 25 active or inactive. For example, one or more immunogenic portions of other tumor antigens may be present, either incorporated into a fusion polypeptide or as a separate compound, within the composition or vaccine.

A pharmaceutical composition or vaccine may contain DNA encoding one or more of the polypeptides as described above, such that the polypeptide is generated *in situ*. As noted above, the DNA may be present within any of a variety of delivery systems known to those of ordinary skill in the art, including nucleic acid expression systems, bacteria and viral expression 30 systems. Numerous gene delivery techniques are well known in the art, such as those described by Rolland, *Crit. Rev. Therap. Drug Carrier Systems* 15:143-198, 1998, and references cited therein. Appropriate nucleic acid expression systems contain the necessary DNA sequences for expression

in the patient (such as a suitable promoter and terminating signal). Bacterial delivery systems involve the administration of a bacterium (such as *Bacillus-Calmette-Guerrin*) that expresses an immunogenic portion of the polypeptide on its cell surface or secretes such an epitope. In a preferred embodiment, the DNA may be introduced using a viral expression system (e.g., vaccinia 5 or other pox virus, retrovirus, or adenovirus), which may involve the use of a non-pathogenic (defective), replication competent virus. Suitable systems are disclosed, for example, in Fisher-Hoch et al., *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA* 86:317-321, 1989; Flexner et al., *Ann. N.Y. Acad. Sci.* 569:86-103, 1989; Flexner et al., *Vaccine* 8:17-21, 1990; U.S. Patent Nos. 4,603,112, 4,769,330, and 5,017,487; WO 89/01973; U.S. Patent No. 4,777,127; GB 2,200,651; EP 0,345,242; 10 WO 91/02805; Berkner, *Biotechniques* 6:616-627, 1988; Rosenfeld et al., *Science* 252:431-434, 1991; Kolis et al., *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA* 91:215-219, 1994; Kass-Eisler et al., *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA* 90:11498-11502, 1993; Guzman et al., *Circulation* 88:2838-2848, 1993; and 15 Guzman et al., *Cir. Res.* 73:1202-1207, 1993. Techniques for incorporating DNA into such expression systems are well known to those of ordinary skill in the art. The DNA may also be 20 "naked," as described, for example, in Ulmer et al., *Science* 259:1745-1749, 1993 and reviewed by Cohen, *Science* 259:1691-1692, 1993. The uptake of naked DNA may be increased by coating the 25 DNA onto biodegradable beads, which are efficiently transported into the cells.

While any suitable carrier known to those of ordinary skill in the art may be employed in the pharmaceutical compositions of this invention, the type of carrier will vary 30 depending on the mode of administration. Compositions of the present invention may be formulated for any appropriate manner of administration, including for example, topical, oral, nasal, intravenous, intracranial, intraperitoneal, subcutaneous or intramuscular administration. For parenteral administration, such as subcutaneous injection, the carrier preferably comprises water, saline, alcohol, a fat, a wax or a buffer. For oral administration, any of the above carriers or a solid 35 carrier, such as mannitol, lactose, starch, magnesium stearate, sodium succharine, talcum, cellulose, glucose, sucrose, and magnesium carbonate, may be employed. Biodegradable microspheres (e.g., polylactate polyglycolate) may also be employed as carriers for the pharmaceutical compositions of this invention. Suitable biodegradable microspheres are disclosed, for example, in U.S. Patent Nos. 4,897,268 and 5,075,109.

Such compositions may also comprise buffers (e.g., neutral buffered saline or phosphate buffered saline), carbohydrates (e.g., glucose, mannose, sucrose or dextrans), mannitol, 40 proteins, polypeptides or amino acids such as glycine, antioxidants, chelating agents such as EDTA

or glutathione, adjuvants (e.g., aluminum hydroxide) and/or preservatives. Alternatively, compositions of the present invention may be formulated as a lyophilizate. Compounds may also be encapsulated within liposomes using well known technology.

Any of a variety of immunostimulants may be employed in the vaccines of this invention. For example, an adjuvant may be included. Most adjuvants contain a substance designed to protect the antigen from rapid catabolism, such as aluminum hydroxide or mineral oil, and a stimulator of immune responses, such as lipid A, *Bordetella pertussis* or *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* derived proteins. Suitable adjuvants are commercially available as, for example, Freund's Incomplete Adjuvant and Complete Adjuvant (Difco Laboratories, Detroit, MI); Merck 10 Adjuvant 65 (Merck and Company, Inc., Rahway, NJ); aluminum salts such as aluminum hydroxide gel (alum) or aluminum phosphate; salts of calcium, iron or zinc; an insoluble suspension of acylated tyrosine; acylated sugars; cationically or anionically derivatized polysaccharides; polyphosphazenes; biodegradable microspheres; monophosphoryl lipid A and quill A. Cytokines, such as GM-CSF or interleukin-2, -7, or -12, may also be used as adjuvants.

15 Within the vaccines provided herein, the adjuvant composition is preferably designed to induce an immune response predominantly of the Th1 type. High levels of Th1-type cytokines (e.g., IFN- γ , TNF α , IL-2 and IL-12) tend to favor the induction of cell mediated immune responses to an administered antigen. In contrast, high levels of Th2-type cytokines (e.g., IL-4, IL-5, IL-6 and IL-10) tend to favor the induction of humoral immune responses. Following application of a 20 vaccine as provided herein, a patient will support an immune response that includes Th1- and Th2-type responses. Within a preferred embodiment, in which a response is predominantly Th1-type, the level of Th1-type cytokines will increase to a greater extent than the level of Th2-type cytokines. The levels of these cytokines may be readily assessed using standard assays. For a review of the families of cytokines, see Mosmann and Coffman, *Ann. Rev. Immunol.* 7:145-173, 1989.

25 Preferred adjuvants for use in eliciting a predominantly Th1-type response include, for example, a combination of monophosphoryl lipid A, preferably 3-de-O-acylated monophosphoryl lipid A (3D-MPL), together with an aluminum salt. MPL adjuvants are available from Ribi ImmunoChem Research Inc. (Hamilton, MT; see US Patent Nos. 4,436,727; 4,877,611; 4,866,034 and 4,912,094). CpG-containing oligonucleotides (in which the CpG dinucleotide is 30 unmethylated) also induce a predominantly Th1 response. Such oligonucleotides are well known and are described, for example, in WO 96/02555. Another preferred adjuvant is a saponin, preferably QS21, which may be used alone or in combination with other adjuvants. For example,

an enhanced system involves the combination of a monophosphoryl lipid A and saponin derivative, such as the combination of QS21 and 3D-MPL as described in WO 94/00153, or a less reactogenic composition where the QS21 is quenched with cholesterol, as described in WO 96/33739. Other preferred formulations comprises an oil-in-water emulsion and tocopherol. A particularly potent 5 adjuvant formulation involving QS21, 3D-MPL and tocopherol in an oil-in-water emulsion is described in WO 95/17210. Any vaccine provided herein may be prepared using well known methods that result in a combination of antigen, immune response enhancer and a suitable carrier or excipient.

The compositions described herein may be administered as part of a sustained release 10 formulation (*i.e.*, a formulation such as a capsule, sponge or gel (composed of polysaccharides for example) that effects a slow release of compound following administration). Such formulations may generally be prepared using well known technology and administered by, for example, oral, rectal or subcutaneous implantation, or by implantation at the desired target site. Sustained-release 15 formulations may contain a polypeptide, polynucleotide or antibody dispersed in a carrier matrix and/or contained within a reservoir surrounded by a rate controlling membrane. Carriers for use within such formulations are biocompatible, and may also be biodegradable; preferably the formulation provides a relatively constant level of active component release. The amount of active compound contained within a sustained release formulation depends upon the site of implantation, the rate and expected duration of release and the nature of the condition to be treated or prevented.

20 Any of a variety of delivery vehicles may be employed within pharmaceutical compositions and vaccines to facilitate production of an antigen-specific immune response that targets tumor cells. Delivery vehicles include antigen presenting cells (APCs), such as dendritic cells, macrophages, B cells, monocytes and other cells that may be engineered to be efficient APCs. Such cells may, but need not, be genetically modified to increase the capacity for presenting the 25 antigen, to improve activation and/or maintenance of the T cell response, to have anti-tumor effects *per se* and/or to be immunologically compatible with the receiver (*i.e.*, matched HLA haplotype). APCs may generally be isolated from any of a variety of biological fluids and organs, including tumor and peritumoral tissues, and may be autologous, allogeneic, syngeneic or xenogeneic cells.

Certain preferred embodiments of the present invention use dendritic cells or 30 progenitors thereof as antigen-presenting cells. Dendritic cells are highly potent APCs (Banchereau and Steinman, *Nature* 392:245-251, 1998) and have been shown to be effective as a physiological adjuvant for eliciting prophylactic or therapeutic antitumor immunity (see Timmerman and Levy,

Ann. Rev. Med. 50:507-529, 1999). In general, dendritic cells may be identified based on their typical shape (stellate *in situ*, with marked cytoplasmic processes (dendrites) visible *in vitro*), their ability to take-up, process and present antigens with high efficiency, and their ability to activate naïve T cell responses. Dendritic cells may, of course, be engineered to express specific cell-surface receptors or ligands that are not commonly found on dendritic cells *in vivo* or *ex vivo*, and such modified dendritic cells are contemplated by the present invention. As an alternative to dendritic cells, secreted vesicles antigen-loaded dendritic cells (called exosomes) may be used within a vaccine (see Zitvogel et al., *Nature Med.* 4:594-600, 1998).

Dendritic cells and progenitors may be obtained from peripheral blood, bone marrow, tumor-infiltrating cells, peritumoral tissues-infiltrating cells, lymph nodes, spleen, skin, umbilical cord blood or any other suitable tissue or fluid. For example, dendritic cells may be differentiated *ex vivo* by adding a combination of cytokines such as GM-CSF, IL-4, IL-13 and/or TNF α to cultures of monocytes harvested from peripheral blood. Alternatively, CD34 positive cells harvested from peripheral blood, umbilical cord blood or bone marrow may be differentiated into dendritic cells by adding to the culture medium combinations of GM-CSF, IL-3, TNF α , CD40 ligand, LPS, flt3 ligand and/or other compound(s) that induce differentiation, maturation and proliferation of dendritic cells.

Dendritic cells are conveniently categorized as "immature" and "mature" cells, which allows a simple way to discriminate between two well characterized phenotypes. However, this nomenclature should not be construed to exclude all possible intermediate stages of differentiation. Immature dendritic cells are characterized as APC with a high capacity for antigen uptake and processing, which correlates with the high expression of Fc γ receptor and mannose receptor. The mature phenotype is typically characterized by a lower expression of these markers, but a high expression of cell surface molecules responsible for T cell activation such as class I and class II MHC, adhesion molecules (e.g., CD54 and CD11) and costimulatory molecules (e.g., CD40, CD80, CD86 and 4-1BB).

APCs may generally be transfected with a polynucleotide encoding a prostate-specific protein (or portion or other variant thereof) such that the prostate-specific polypeptide, or an immunogenic portion thereof, is expressed on the cell surface. Such transfection may take place *ex vivo*, and a composition or vaccine comprising such transfected cells may then be used for therapeutic purposes, as described herein. Alternatively, a gene delivery vehicle that targets a dendritic or other antigen presenting cell may be administered to a patient, resulting in transfection

that occurs *in vivo*. *In vivo* and *ex vivo* transfection of dendritic cells, for example, may generally be performed using any methods known in the art, such as those described in WO 97/24447, or the gene gun approach described by Mahvi et al., *Immunology and cell Biology* 75:456-460, 1997. Antigen loading of dendritic cells may be achieved by incubating dendritic cells or progenitor cells 5 with the prostate-specific polypeptide, DNA (naked or within a plasmid vector) or RNA; or with antigen-expressing recombinant bacterium or viruses (e.g., vaccinia, fowlpox, adenovirus or lentivirus vectors). Prior to loading, the polypeptide may be covalently conjugated to an immunological partner that provides T cell help (e.g., a carrier molecule). Alternatively, a dendritic cell may be pulsed with a non-conjugated immunological partner, separately or in the presence of 10 the polypeptide.

CANCER THERAPY

In further aspects of the present invention, the compositions described herein may be used for immunotherapy of cancer, such as prostate cancer. Within such methods, pharmaceutical 15 compositions and vaccines are typically administered to a patient. As used herein, a "patient" refers to any warm-blooded animal, preferably a human. A patient may or may not be afflicted with cancer. Accordingly, the above pharmaceutical compositions and vaccines may be used to prevent the development of a cancer or to treat a patient afflicted with a cancer. A cancer may be diagnosed using criteria generally accepted in the art, including the presence of a malignant tumor. 20 Pharmaceutical compositions and vaccines may be administered either prior to or following surgical removal of primary tumors and/or treatment such as administration of radiotherapy or conventional chemotherapeutic drugs.

Within certain embodiments, immunotherapy may be active immunotherapy, in which treatment relies on the *in vivo* stimulation of the endogenous host immune system to react 25 against tumors with the administration of immune response-modifying agents (such as polypeptides and polynucleotides disclosed herein).

Within other embodiments, immunotherapy may be passive immunotherapy, in which treatment involves the delivery of agents with established tumor-immune reactivity (such as effector cells or antibodies) that can directly or indirectly mediate antitumor effects and does not 30 necessarily depend on an intact host immune system. Examples of effector cells include T cells as discussed above, T lymphocytes (such as CD8⁺ cytotoxic T lymphocytes and CD4⁺ T-helper tumor-infiltrating lymphocytes), killer cells (such as Natural Killer cells and lymphokine-activated killer

cells), B cells and antigen-presenting cells (such as dendritic cells and macrophages) expressing a polypeptide provided herein. T cell receptors and antibody receptors specific for the polypeptides recited herein may be cloned, expressed and transferred into other vectors or effector cells for adoptive immunotherapy. The polypeptides provided herein may also be used to generate 5 antibodies or anti-idiotypic antibodies (as described above and in U.S. Patent No. 4,918,164) for passive immunotherapy.

Effector cells may generally be obtained in sufficient quantities for adoptive immunotherapy by growth *in vitro*, as described herein. Culture conditions for expanding single antigen-specific effector cells to several billion in number with retention of antigen recognition *in* 10 *vivo* are well known in the art. Such *in vitro* culture conditions typically use intermittent stimulation with antigen, often in the presence of cytokines (such as IL-2) and non-dividing feeder cells. As noted above, immunoreactive polypeptides as provided herein may be used to rapidly expand antigen-specific T cell cultures in order to generate a sufficient number of cells for immunotherapy. In particular, antigen-presenting cells, such as dendritic, macrophage, monocyte, 15 fibroblast or B cells, may be pulsed with immunoreactive polypeptides or transfected with one or more polynucleotides using standard techniques well known in the art. For example, antigen-presenting cells can be transfected with a polynucleotide having a promoter appropriate for increasing expression in a recombinant virus or other expression system. Cultured effector cells for use in therapy must be able to grow and distribute widely, and to survive long term *in vivo*. Studies 20 have shown that cultured effector cells can be induced to grow *in vivo* and to survive long term in substantial numbers by repeated stimulation with antigen supplemented with IL-2 (see, for example, Cheever et al., *Immunological Reviews* 157:177, 1997).

Alternatively, a vector expressing a polypeptide recited herein may be introduced into antigen presenting cells taken from a patient and clonally propagated *ex vivo* for transplant back 25 into the same patient. Transfected cells may be reintroduced into the patient using any means known in the art, preferably in sterile form by intravenous, intracavitory, intraperitoneal or intratumor administration.

Routes and frequency of administration of the therapeutic compositions disclosed herein, as well as dosage, will vary from individual to individual, and may be readily established 30 using standard techniques. In general, the pharmaceutical compositions and vaccines may be administered by injection (e.g., intracutaneous, intramuscular, intravenous or subcutaneous), intranasally (e.g., by aspiration) or orally. Preferably, between 1 and 10 doses may be administered.

over a 52 week period. Preferably, 6 doses are administered, at intervals of 1 month, and booster vaccinations may be given periodically thereafter. Alternate protocols may be appropriate for individual patients. A suitable dose is an amount of a compound that, when administered as described above, is capable of promoting an anti-tumor immune response, and is at least 10-50% above the basal (*i.e.*, untreated) level. Such response can be monitored by measuring the anti-tumor antibodies in a patient or by vaccine-dependent generation of cytolytic effector cells capable of killing the patient's tumor cells *in vitro*. Such vaccines should also be capable of causing an immune response that leads to an improved clinical outcome (*e.g.*, more frequent remissions, complete or partial or longer disease-free survival) in vaccinated patients as compared to non-vaccinated patients. In general, for pharmaceutical compositions and vaccines comprising one or more polypeptides, the amount of each polypeptide present in a dose ranges from about 25 µg to 5 mg per kg of host. Suitable dose sizes will vary with the size of the patient, but will typically range from about 0.1 mL to about 5 mL.

In general, an appropriate dosage and treatment regimen provides the active compound(s) in an amount sufficient to provide therapeutic and/or prophylactic benefit. Such a response can be monitored by establishing an improved clinical outcome (*e.g.*, more frequent remissions, complete or partial, or longer disease-free survival) in treated patients as compared to non-treated patients. Increases in preexisting immune responses to a prostate-specific protein generally correlate with an improved clinical outcome. Such immune responses may generally be evaluated using standard proliferation, cytotoxicity or cytokine assays, which may be performed using samples obtained from a patient before and after treatment.

METHODS FOR DETECTING CANCER

In general, a cancer may be detected in a patient based on the presence of one or more prostate-specific proteins and/or polymucleotides encoding such proteins in a biological sample (for example, blood, sera, urine and/or tumor biopsies) obtained from the patient. In other words, such proteins may be used as markers to indicate the presence or absence of a cancer such as prostate cancer. In addition, such proteins may be useful for the detection of other cancers. The binding agents provided herein generally permit detection of the level of antigen that binds to the agent in the biological sample. Polymucleotide primers and probes may be used to detect the level of mRNA encoding a tumor protein, which is also indicative of the presence or absence of a cancer.

In general, a prostate tumor sequence should be present at a level that is at least three fold higher in tumor tissue than in normal tissue

There are a variety of assay formats known to those of ordinary skill in the art for using a binding agent to detect polypeptide markers in a sample. See, e.g., Harlow and Lane, *5 Antibodies: A Laboratory Manual*, Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, 1988. In general, the presence or absence of a cancer in a patient may be determined by (a) contacting a biological sample obtained from a patient with a binding agent; (b) detecting in the sample a level of polypeptide that binds to the binding agent; and (c) comparing the level of polypeptide with a predetermined cut-off value.

In a preferred embodiment, the assay involves the use of binding agent immobilized
10 on a solid support to bind to and remove the polypeptide from the remainder of the sample. The bound polypeptide may then be detected using a detection reagent that contains a reporter group and specifically binds to the binding agent/polypeptide complex. Such detection reagents may comprise, for example, a binding agent that specifically binds to the polypeptide or an antibody or other agent that specifically binds to the binding agent, such as an anti-immunoglobulin, protein G,
15 protein A or a lectin. Alternatively, a competitive assay may be utilized, in which a polypeptide is labeled with a reporter group and allowed to bind to the immobilized binding agent after incubation of the binding agent with the sample. The extent to which components of the sample inhibit the binding of the labeled polypeptide to the binding agent is indicative of the reactivity of the sample with the immobilized binding agent. Suitable polypeptides for use within such assays include full
20 length prostate-specific proteins and portions thereof to which the binding agent binds, as described above.

The solid support may be any material known to those of ordinary skill in the art to which the protein may be attached. For example, the solid support may be a test well in a microtiter plate or a nitrocellulose or other suitable membrane. Alternatively, the support may be a bead or
25 disc, such as glass, fiberglass, latex or a plastic material such as polystyrene or polyvinylchloride. The support may also be a magnetic particle or a fiber optic sensor, such as those disclosed, for example, in U.S. Patent No. 5,359,681. The binding agent may be immobilized on the solid support using a variety of techniques known to those of skill in the art, which are amply described in the patent and scientific literature. In the context of the present invention, the term "immobilization"
30 refers to both noncovalent association, such as adsorption, and covalent attachment (which may be a direct linkage between the agent and functional groups on the support or may be a linkage by way of a cross-linking agent). Immobilization by adsorption to a well in a microtiter plate or to a

membrane is preferred. In such cases, adsorption may be achieved by contacting the binding agent, in a suitable buffer, with the solid support for a suitable amount of time. The contact time varies with temperature, but is typically between about 1 hour and about 1 day. In general, contacting a well of a plastic microtiter plate (such as polystyrene or polyvinylchloride) with an amount of 5 binding agent ranging from about 10 ng to about 10 μ g, and preferably about 100 ng to about 1 μ g, is sufficient to immobilize an adequate amount of binding agent.

Covalent attachment of binding agent to a solid support may generally be achieved by first reacting the support with a bifunctional reagent that will react with both the support and a functional group, such as a hydroxyl or amino group, on the binding agent. For example, the 10 binding agent may be covalently attached to supports having an appropriate polymer coating using benzoquinone or by condensation of an aldehyde group on the support with an amine and an active hydrogen on the binding partner (see, e.g., Pierce Immunotechnology Catalog and Handbook, 1991, at A12-A13).

In certain embodiments, the assay is a two-antibody sandwich assay. This assay may 15 be performed by first contacting an antibody that has been immobilized on a solid support, commonly the well of a microtiter plate, with the sample, such that polypeptides within the sample are allowed to bind to the immobilized antibody. Unbound sample is then removed from the immobilized polypeptide-antibody complexes and a detection reagent (preferably a second antibody capable of binding to a different site on the polypeptide) containing a reporter group is added. The 20 amount of detection reagent that remains bound to the solid support is then determined using a method appropriate for the specific reporter group.

More specifically, once the antibody is immobilized on the support as described above, the remaining protein binding sites on the support are typically blocked. Any suitable blocking agent known to those of ordinary skill in the art, such as bovine serum albumin or Tween 25 20TM (Sigma Chemical Co., St. Louis, MO). The immobilized antibody is then incubated with the sample, and polypeptide is allowed to bind to the antibody. The sample may be diluted with a suitable diluent, such as phosphate-buffered saline (PBS) prior to incubation. In general, an appropriate contact time (*i.e.*, incubation time) is a period of time that is sufficient to detect the presence of polypeptide within a sample obtained from an individual with prostate cancer. 30 Preferably, the contact time is sufficient to achieve a level of binding that is at least about 95% of that achieved at equilibrium between bound and unbound polypeptide. Those of ordinary skill in the art will recognize that the time necessary to achieve equilibrium may be readily determined by

assaying the level of binding that occurs over a period of time. At room temperature, an incubation time of about 30 minutes is generally sufficient.

Unbound sample may then be removed by washing the solid support with an appropriate buffer, such as PBS containing 0.1% Tween 20TM. The second antibody, which contains 5 a reporter group, may then be added to the solid support. Preferred reporter groups include those groups recited above.

The detection reagent is then incubated with the immobilized antibody-polypeptide complex for an amount of time sufficient to detect the bound polypeptide. An appropriate amount of time may generally be determined by assaying the level of binding that occurs over a period of 10 time. Unbound detection reagent is then removed and bound detection reagent is detected using the reporter group. The method employed for detecting the reporter group depends upon the nature of the reporter group. For radioactive groups, scintillation counting or autoradiographic methods are generally appropriate. Spectroscopic methods may be used to detect dyes, luminescent groups and fluorescent groups. Biotin may be detected using avidin, coupled to a different reporter group 15 (commonly a radioactive or fluorescent group or an enzyme). Enzyme reporter groups may generally be detected by the addition of substrate (generally for a specific period of time), followed by spectroscopic or other analysis of the reaction products.

To determine the presence or absence of a cancer, such as prostate cancer, the signal detected from the reporter group that remains bound to the solid support is generally compared to a 20 signal that corresponds to a predetermined cut-off value. In one preferred embodiment, the cut-off value for the detection of a cancer is the average mean signal obtained when the immobilized antibody is incubated with samples from patients without the cancer. In general, a sample generating a signal that is three standard deviations above the predetermined cut-off value is considered positive for the cancer. In an alternate preferred embodiment, the cut-off value is 25 determined using a Receiver Operator Curve, according to the method of Sackett et al., *Clinical Epidemiology: A Basic Science for Clinical Medicine*, Little Brown and Co., 1985, p. 106-7. Briefly, in this embodiment, the cut-off value may be determined from a plot of pairs of true 30 positive rates (*i.e.*, sensitivity) and false positive rates (100%-specificity) that correspond to each possible cut-off value for the diagnostic test result. The cut-off value on the plot that is the closest to the upper left-hand corner (*i.e.*, the value that encloses the largest area) is the most accurate cut-off value, and a sample generating a signal that is higher than the cut-off value determined by this method may be considered positive. Alternatively, the cut-off value may be shifted to the left along

the plot, to minimize the false positive rate, or to the right, to minimize the false negative rate. In general, a sample generating a signal that is higher than the cut-off value determined by this method is considered positive for a cancer.

In a related embodiment, the assay is performed in a flow-through or strip test format, wherein the binding agent is immobilized on a membrane, such as nitrocellulose. In the flow-through test, polypeptides within the sample bind to the immobilized binding agent as the sample passes through the membrane. A second, labeled binding agent then binds to the binding agent-polypeptide complex as a solution containing the second binding agent flows through the membrane. The detection of bound second binding agent may then be performed as described above. In the strip test format, one end of the membrane to which binding agent is bound is immersed in a solution containing the sample. The sample migrates along the membrane through a region containing second binding agent and to the area of immobilized binding agent. Concentration of second binding agent at the area of immobilized antibody indicates the presence of a cancer. Typically, the concentration of second binding agent at that site generates a pattern, such as a line, that can be read visually. The absence of such a pattern indicates a negative result. In general, the amount of binding agent immobilized on the membrane is selected to generate a visually discernible pattern when the biological sample contains a level of polypeptide that would be sufficient to generate a positive signal in the two-antibody sandwich assay, in the format discussed above. Preferred binding agents for use in such assays are antibodies and antigen-binding fragments thereof. Preferably, the amount of antibody immobilized on the membrane ranges from about 25 ng to about 1 µg, and more preferably from about 50 ng to about 500 ng. Such tests can typically be performed with a very small amount of biological sample.

Of course, numerous other assay protocols exist that are suitable for use with the proteins or binding agents of the present invention. The above descriptions are intended to be exemplary only. For example, it will be apparent to those of ordinary skill in the art that the above protocols may be readily modified to use prostate-specific polypeptides to detect antibodies that bind to such polypeptides in a biological sample. The detection of such prostate-specific protein specific antibodies may correlate with the presence of a cancer.

A cancer may also, or alternatively, be detected based on the presence of T cells that specifically react with a prostate-specific protein in a biological sample. Within certain methods, a biological sample comprising CD4⁺ and/or CD8⁺ T cells isolated from a patient is incubated with a prostate-specific polypeptide, a polynucleotide encoding such a polypeptide and/or an APC that

expresses at least an immunogenic portion of such a polypeptide, and the presence or absence of specific activation of the T cells is detected. Suitable biological samples include, but are not limited to, isolated T cells. For example, T cells may be isolated from a patient by routine techniques (such as by Ficoll/Hypaque density gradient centrifugation of peripheral blood lymphocytes). T cells may 5 be incubated *in vitro* for 2-9 days (typically 4 days) at 37°C with prostate-specific polypeptide (e.g., 5 - 25 µg/ml). It may be desirable to incubate another aliquot of a T cell sample in the absence of prostate-specific polypeptide to serve as a control. For CD4⁺ T cells, activation is preferably detected by evaluating proliferation of the T cells. For CD8⁺ T cells, activation is preferably detected by evaluating cytolytic activity. A level of proliferation that is at least two fold greater 10 and/or a level of cytolytic activity that is at least 20% greater than in disease-free patients indicates the presence of a cancer in the patient.

As noted above, a cancer may also, or alternatively, be detected based on the level of mRNA encoding a prostate-specific protein in a biological sample. For example, at least two oligonucleotide primers may be employed in a polymerase chain reaction (PCR) based assay to 15 amplify a portion of a prostate-specific cDNA derived from a biological sample, wherein at least one of the oligonucleotide primers is specific for (i.e., hybridizes to) a polynucleotide encoding the prostate-specific protein. The amplified cDNA is then separated and detected using techniques well known in the art, such as gel electrophoresis. Similarly, oligonucleotide probes that specifically hybridize to a polynucleotide encoding a prostate-specific protein may be used in a hybridization 20 assay to detect the presence of polynucleotide encoding the protein in a biological sample.

To permit hybridization under assay conditions, oligonucleotide primers and probes should comprise an oligonucleotide sequence that has at least about 60%, preferably at least about 75% and more preferably at least about 90%, identity to a portion of a polynucleotide encoding a prostate-specific protein that is at least 10 nucleotides, and preferably at least 20 nucleotides, in 25 length. Preferably, oligonucleotide primers and/or probes will hybridize to a polynucleotide encoding a polypeptide disclosed herein under moderately stringent conditions, as defined above. Oligonucleotide primers and/or probes which may be usefully employed in the diagnostic methods described herein preferably are at least 10-40 nucleotides in length. In a preferred embodiment, the oligonucleotide primers comprise at least 10 contiguous nucleotides, more preferably at least 15 30 contiguous nucleotides, of a DNA molecule having a sequence recited in SEQ ID NO: 1-111, 115-171, 173-175, 177, 179-305, 307-315, 326, 328, 330, 332-335, 340-375, 381, 382, 384-476, 524, 526, 530, 531, 533, 535 and 536. Techniques for both PCR based assays and hybridization assays

are well known in the art (see, for example, Mullis et al., *Cold Spring Harbor Symp. Quant. Biol.*, 52:263, 1987; Erlich ed., *PCR Technology*, Stockton Press, NY, 1989).

One preferred assay employs RT-PCR, in which PCR is applied in conjunction with reverse transcription. Typically, RNA is extracted from a biological sample, such as biopsy tissue, 5 and is reverse transcribed to produce cDNA molecules. PCR amplification using at least one specific primer generates a cDNA molecule, which may be separated and visualized using, for example, gel electrophoresis. Amplification may be performed on biological samples taken from a test patient and from an individual who is not afflicted with a cancer. The amplification reaction may be performed on several dilutions of cDNA spanning two orders of magnitude. A two-fold or 10 greater increase in expression in several dilutions of the test patient sample as compared to the same dilutions of the non-cancerous sample is typically considered positive.

In another embodiment, the disclosed compositions may be used as markers for the progression of cancer. In this embodiment, assays as described above for the diagnosis of a cancer may be performed over time, and the change in the level of reactive polypeptide(s) or 15 polynucleotide evaluated. For example, the assays may be performed every 24-72 hours for a period of 6 months to 1 year, and thereafter performed as needed. In general, a cancer is progressing in those patients in whom the level of polypeptide or polynucleotide detected increases over time. In contrast, the cancer is not progressing when the level of reactive polypeptide or polynucleotide either remains constant or decreases with time.

20 Certain *in vivo* diagnostic assays may be performed directly on a tumor. One such assay involves contacting tumor cells with a binding agent. The bound binding agent may then be detected directly or indirectly via a reporter group. Such binding agents may also be used in histological applications. Alternatively, polynucleotide probes may be used within such applications.

25 As noted above, to improve sensitivity, multiple prostate-specific protein markers may be assayed within a given sample. It will be apparent that binding agents specific for different proteins provided herein may be combined within a single assay. Further, multiple primers or probes may be used concurrently. The selection of protein markers may be based on routine experiments to determine combinations that results in optimal sensitivity. In addition, or 30 alternatively, assays for proteins provided herein may be combined with assays for other known tumor antigens.

DIAGNOSTIC KITS

The present invention further provides kits for use within any of the above diagnostic methods. Such kits typically comprise two or more components necessary for performing a diagnostic assay. Components may be compounds, reagents, containers and/or equipment. For example, one container within a kit may contain a monoclonal antibody or fragment thereof that specifically binds to a prostate-specific protein. Such antibodies or fragments may be provided attached to a support material, as described above. One or more additional containers may enclose elements, such as reagents or buffers, to be used in the assay. Such kits may also, or alternatively, contain a detection reagent as described above that contains a reporter group suitable for direct or 10 indirect detection of antibody binding.

Alternatively, a kit may be designed to detect the level of mRNA encoding a prostate-specific protein in a biological sample. Such kits generally comprise at least one oligonucleotide probe or primer, as described above, that hybridizes to a polynucleotide encoding a prostate-specific protein. Such an oligonucleotide may be used, for example, within a PCR or 15 hybridization assay. Additional components that may be present within such kits include a second oligonucleotide and/or a diagnostic reagent or container to facilitate the detection of a polynucleotide encoding a prostate-specific protein.

The following Examples are offered by way of illustration and not by way of limitation.

EXAMPLES

EXAMPLE 1

5 ISOLATION AND CHARACTERIZATION OF PROSTATE-SPECIFIC POLYPEPTIDES

This Example describes the isolation of certain prostate-specific polypeptides from a prostate tumor cDNA library.

A human prostate tumor cDNA expression library was constructed from prostate tumor poly A⁺ RNA using a Superscript Plasmid System for cDNA Synthesis and Plasmid Cloning kit (BRL Life Technologies, Gaithersburg, MD 20897) following the manufacturer's protocol. Specifically, prostate tumor tissues were homogenized with polytron (Kinematica, Switzerland) and total RNA was extracted using Trizol reagent (BRL Life Technologies) as directed by the manufacturer. The poly A⁺ RNA was then purified using a Qiagen oligotex spin column mRNA purification kit (Qiagen, Santa Clarita, CA 91355) according to the manufacturer's protocol. First-strand cDNA was synthesized using the NotI/Oligo-dT18 primer. Double-stranded cDNA was synthesized, ligated with EcoRI/BAXI adaptors (Invitrogen, San Diego, CA) and digested with NotI. Following size fractionation with Chroma Spin-1000 columns (Clontech, Palo Alto, CA), the cDNA was ligated into the EcoRI/NotI site of pCDNA3.1 (Invitrogen) and transformed into 20 ElectroMax *E. coli* DH10B cells (BRL Life Technologies) by electroporation.

Using the same procedure, a normal human pancreas cDNA expression library was prepared from a pool of six tissue specimens (Clontech). The cDNA libraries were characterized by determining the number of independent colonies, the percentage of clones that carried insert, the average insert size and by sequence analysis. The prostate tumor library contained 1.64×10^7 independent colonies, with 70% of clones having an insert and the average insert size being 1745 base pairs. The normal pancreas cDNA library contained 3.3×10^6 independent colonies, with 69% of clones having inserts and the average insert size being 1120 base pairs. For both libraries, sequence analysis showed that the majority of clones had a full length cDNA sequence and were synthesized from mRNA, with minimal rRNA and mitochondrial DNA contamination.

30 cDNA library subtraction was performed using the above prostate tumor and normal pancreas cDNA libraries, as described by Hara *et al.* (*Blood*, 84:189-199, 1994) with some modifications. Specifically, a prostate tumor-specific subtracted cDNA library was generated as

follows. Normal pancreas cDNA library (70 µg) was digested with EcoRI, NotI, and SfI, followed by a filling-in reaction with DNA polymerase Klenow fragment. After phenol-chloroform extraction and ethanol precipitation, the DNA was dissolved in 100 µl of H₂O, heat-denatured and mixed with 100 µl (100 µg) of Photoprobe biotin (Vector Laboratories, Burlingame, CA). As recommended by the manufacturer, the resulting mixture was irradiated with a 270 W sunlamp on ice for 20 minutes. Additional Photoprobe biotin (50 µl) was added and the biotinylation reaction was repeated. After extraction with butanol five times, the DNA was ethanol-precipitated and dissolved in 23 µl H₂O to form the driver DNA.

To form the tracer DNA, 10 µg prostate tumor cDNA library was digested with 10 BanHI and XbaI, phenol chloroform extracted and passed through Chroma spin-400 columns (Clontech). Following ethanol precipitation, the tracer DNA was dissolved in 5 µl H₂O. Tracer DNA was mixed with 15 µl driver DNA and 20 µl of 2 x hybridization buffer (1.5 M NaCl/10 mM EDTA/50 mM HEPES pH 7.5/0.2% sodium dodecyl sulfate), overlaid with mineral oil, and heat-denatured completely. The sample was immediately transferred into a 68 °C water bath and 15 incubated for 20 hours (long hybridization [LH]). The reaction mixture was then subjected to a streptavidin treatment followed by phenol/chloroform extraction. This process was repeated three more times. Subtracted DNA was precipitated, dissolved in 12 µl H₂O, mixed with 8 µl driver DNA and 20 µl of 2 x hybridization buffer, and subjected to a hybridization at 68 °C for 2 hours (short hybridization [SH]). After removal of biotinylated double-stranded DNA, subtracted cDNA 20 was ligated into BamHI/XbaI site of chloramphenicol resistant pBCSK' (Stratagene, La Jolla, CA 92037) and transformed into ElectroMax *E. coli* DH10B cells by electroporation to generate a prostate tumor specific subtracted cDNA library (referred to as "prostate subtraction 1").

To analyze the subtracted cDNA library, plasmid DNA was prepared from 100 independent clones, randomly picked from the subtracted prostate tumor specific library and 25 grouped based on insert size. Representative cDNA clones were further characterized by DNA sequencing with a Perkin Elmer/Applied Biosystems Division Automated Sequencer Model 373A (Foster City, CA). Six cDNA clones, hereinafter referred to as F1-13, F1-12, F1-16, H1-1, H1-9 and H1-4, were shown to be abundant in the subtracted prostate-specific cDNA library. The determined 3' and 5' cDNA sequences for F1-12 are provided in SEQ ID NO: 2 and 3, respectively, 30 with determined 3' cDNA sequences for F1-13, F1-16, H1-1, H1-9 and H1-4 being provided in SEQ ID NO: 1 and 4-7, respectively.

The cDNA sequences for the isolated clones were compared to known sequences in the gene bank using the EMBL and GenBank databases (release 96). Four of the prostate tumor cDNA clones, F1-13, F1-16, H1-1, and H1-4, were determined to encode the following previously identified proteins: prostate specific antigen (PSA), human glandular kallikrein, human tumor expression enhanced gene, and mitochondria cytochrome C oxidase subunit II. H1-9 was found to be identical to a previously identified human autonomously replicating sequence. No significant homologies to the cDNA sequence for F1-12 were found.

Subsequent studies led to the isolation of a full-length cDNA sequence for F1-12. This sequence is provided in SEQ ID NO: 107, with the corresponding predicted amino acid sequence being provided in SEQ ID NO: 108.

To clone less abundant prostate tumor specific genes, cDNA library subtraction was performed by subtracting the prostate tumor cDNA library described above with the normal pancreas cDNA library and with the three most abundant genes in the previously subtracted prostate tumor specific cDNA library: human glandular kallikrein, prostate specific antigen (PSA), and mitochondria cytochrome C oxidase subunit II. Specifically, 1 μ g each of human glandular kallikrein, PSA and mitochondria cytochrome C oxidase subunit II cDNAs in pCDNA3.1 were added to the driver DNA and subtraction was performed as described above to provide a second subtracted cDNA library hereinafter referred to as the "subtracted prostate tumor specific cDNA library with spike".

Twenty-two cDNA clones were isolated from the subtracted prostate tumor specific cDNA library with spike. The determined 3' and 5' cDNA sequences for the clones referred to as J1-17, L1-12, N1-1862, J1-13, J1-19, J1-25, J1-24, K1-58, K1-63, L1-4 and L1-14 are provided in SEQ ID NOS: 8-9, 10-11, 12-13, 14-15, 16-17, 18-19, 20-21, 22-23, 24-25, 26-27 and 28-29, respectively. The determined 3' cDNA sequences for the clones referred to as J1-12, J1-16, J1-21, K1-48, K1-55, L1-2, L1-6, N1-1858, N1-1860, N1-1861, N1-1864 are provided in SEQ ID NOS: 30-40, respectively. Comparison of these sequences with those in the gene bank as described above, revealed no significant homologies to three of the five most abundant DNA species, (J1-17, L1-12 and N1-1862; SEQ ID NOS: 8-9, 10-11 and 12-13, respectively). Of the remaining two most abundant species, one (J1-12; SEQ ID NO:30) was found to be identical to the previously identified human pulmonary surfactant-associated protein, and the other (K1-48; SEQ ID NO:33) was determined to have some homology to *R. norvegicus* mRNA for 2-arylpropionyl-CoA epimerase. Of the 17 less abundant cDNA clones isolated from the subtracted prostate tumor specific cDNA